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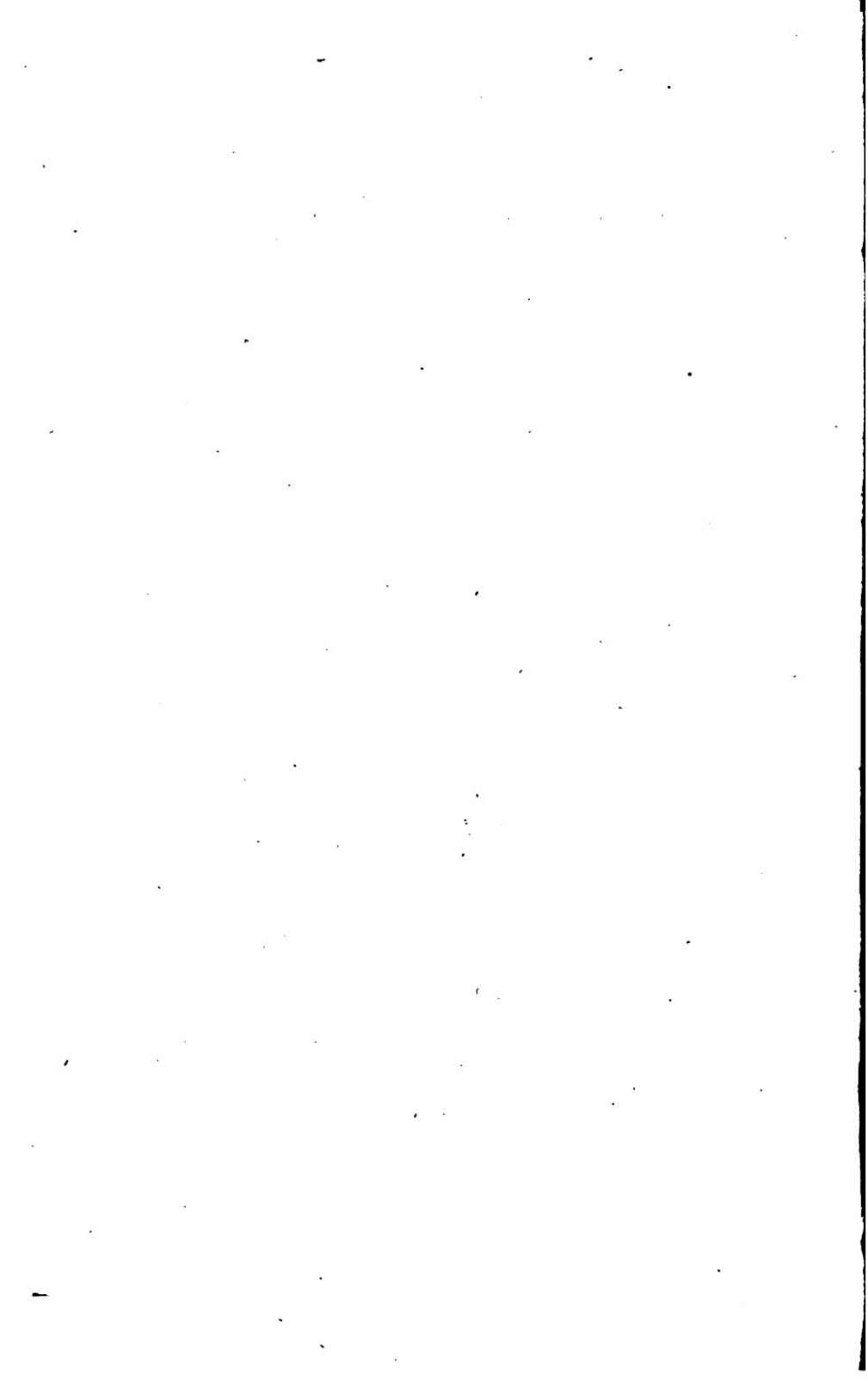
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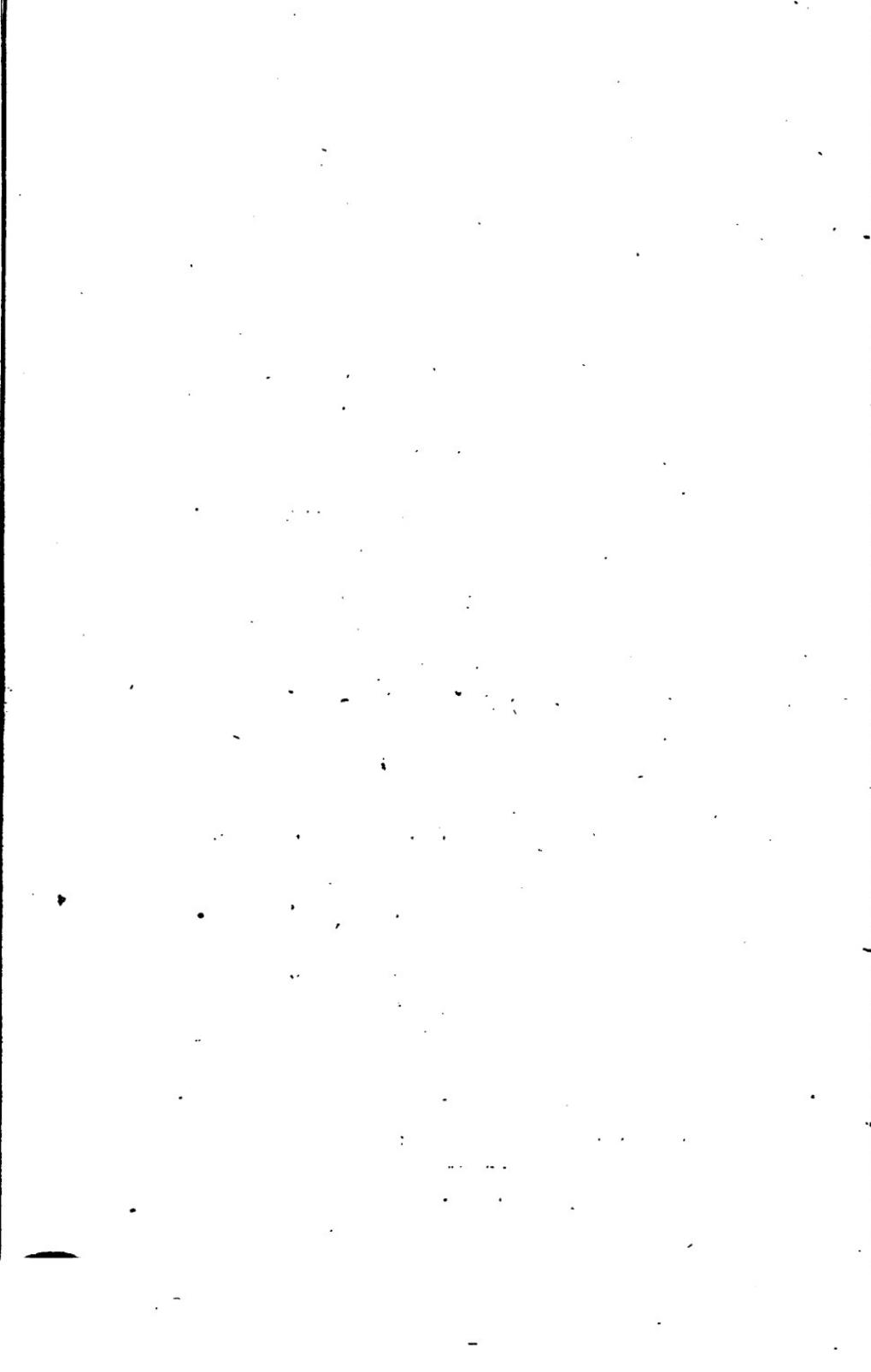
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AN
ACCOUNT
OF
THE INCIDENTS,
FROM WHICH
THE TITLE AND PART OF THE STORY
OF
Shakspeare's Tempest
WERE DERIVED;
AND ITS TRUE DATE ASCERTAINED.

BY EDMOND MALONE.

London:
PRINTED BY C. AND R. BALDWIN, NEW BRIDGE-STREET.

1808.



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE following Account of the circumstances attending the storm, by which Sir George Somers was shipwrecked on the island of Bermuda, in the year 1609, which unquestionably gave rise to Shakspeare's *TEMPEST*, and suggested to him the title, as well as some incidents, of that admirable comedy, was written some years ago, and shewn to a highly valued friend, whose literary attainments and love of curious inquiry always incline him to lend a favourable ear to the researches of others. It makes a part of the *Disquisition concerning the order of Shakspeare's plays*, in an enlarged, and I trust improved, form, and will hereafter appear in its place in a second edition of that great poet's works; which has been too long delayed by various causes, not necessary to be here stated, but will, I hope at no distant period, be committed to the press.

The immediate connexion between Shakspeare's play and the tempest above alluded to, not having been noticed by any preceding editor or commentator, I conceived this discovery, which forms the subject of the following pages, to be exclusively my own; but the Observations on this poet by a learned and ingenious critick, which have been

published within these few days, have shewn me my mistake in this respect; the same notion having also struck the author of that valuable and entertaining work.* That gentleman, however, whose remarks abundantly evince that his candour is equal to his learning and judgment, I doubt not, will be pleased to find his statement on this subject strengthened and confirmed by authentick evidence, and the true date of this delightful comedy indisputably ascertained.

Every thing that tends to illustrate the works of Shakspeare, carries with it so much attraction, that I shall make no apology for the following detached observations; nor is it necessary to state more particularly the motives which have induced me to commit them now to the press.

FOLEY PLACE,
January 12, 1808.

* Illustrations of Shakspeare and Ancient Manners, &c. in two volumes, 8vo. By Francis Douce. See vol. I. p. 5.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF
THE INCIDENTS, ETC.

THE TEMPEST, 1611.

IN the Essay on the Chronological Order of Shakspeare's Plays, published in 1790, I observed, that probably some particular and late misfortune at sea gave rise to the comedy now under our consideration, and induced our poet to denominate it THE TEMPEST. On further investigation of this subject, and after perusing some curious and very scarce tracts of that time, which I had not then seen, I have no doubt that my conjecture was perfectly well founded, and that the leading circumstance of this play, from which its title is derived, was suggested to Shakspeare by a recent disaster, which doubtless engaged much of the conversation of his contemporaries,—the dreadful hurricane that dispersed the fleet of Sir George Somers and Sir Thomas Gates, in July 1609, on their passage with a large supply of provisions and men for the infant colony in Virginia; by which the Admiral-ship, as it was called, having those

two commanders on board, was separated from the rest of the fleet, and wrecked on the Island of Bermuda. The principal circumstances indeed correspond so precisely, that at the first view it may appear strange, that the true origin of this comedy was not long since found out; but the wonder on that head will cease, when it is considered how very difficult it is to ascertain the minute particulars of an event that happened near two hundred years ago, and that accident alone can furnish us with the volumes which composed Shakspeare's library. Without the aid of those tracts, in which the various circumstances of this misadventure were related, the resemblance between certain passages in the play and the archetype on which it was formed, could not be discovered. I may add, that our poet himself also, in some measure, contributed to lead the most sedulous inquirer astray, by very properly making the scene of his piece an island at a considerable distance from Bermuda, in order to give the magical part of his drama a certain mysterious dignity which Bermuda itself, then the general topick of conversation, could not have had. Without having read Tacitus, he well knew that **OMNE IGNOTUM PRO MAGNIFICO EST**; that an unknown island would give a larger scope to his imagination, and make a greater impression on theatrical spectators, than one of which the more enlightened part of his audience had recently read a mi-

nute and circumstantial account.—Unquestionably, however, the circumstance of Bermuda's having been considered an enchanted island gave rise to the magick of THE TEMPEST, and was immediately in his thoughts during its composition.

Our poet's great patron, the Earl of Southampton, had early shewn a strong disposition to encourage voyages of discovery; in which a principal motive that actuated him and other distinguished persons of those times, seems to have been, the hope of civilizing and converting the savages of remote countries to Christianity. In the year 1605, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Lord Arundel of Wardour, he had fitted out a ship under the command of Captain George Weymouth, with a view to make discoveries on the coast of Virginia. On what part of the large district which then bore that name he landed, is not exactly known; but a very intelligent writer supposes that he sailed up the river of Connecticut. His stay, however, was very short: for after having for some time explored the country, and carried on some traffick with the natives, from whom he had taken five Indians as hostages during his intercourse with them, finding reason to believe that some treachery was intended towards him, he speedily set sail for England, where he arrived on the 18th of July, after an absence of about three months; bringing with him the Indians above-mentioned. Two of those savages, NAMONTACK and MA-

CHUMPS lived to sail for their own country with Sir George Somers in 1600; another named TANTUM sailed for Virginia with Captain Smith in 1614; and the other two probably died in London, and were exhibited as a show after their deaths, a circumstance to which Shakspeare has alluded in the second act of this comedy, sc. 2; and which, though then unacquainted with these particulars, I formerly suggested, as likely to contribute some aid in fixing the date of THE TEMPEST: but if even the day of the death of either of them were known, it would only ascertain a time *before* which the play could not have been composed, unless it were shewn that some Indian had previously died, and been exhibited in London; and I am now not under the necessity of having recourse to such uncertain grounds of conjecture, as I shall be able to point out the precise period when this beautiful comedy was written and first represented.

In 1608, Captain Harlow was sent to Cape Cod by Lord Southampton and some of the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight, and brought back with him five Indians, one of whom was named EPINEW or EPINOW, a man of extraordinary stature and strength, who was exhibite^d for money in various parts of London.

I have mentioned the voyages of Captains Weymouth and Harlow, because they were undertaken partly at the charge of Lord Southamp-

ton, and must on that account alone have attracted our poet's notice, and drawn his attention to the colonial projects that took place at this period. Men's thoughts indeed were then so strongly directed towards the new world, that the successes and miscarriages of the several adventurers who went there could not but have been a very general topick of conversation, as is evinced by the various publications on those subjects.*

* 1. A briefe and true Relation of the Discovery of the North Part of Virginia, being a most pleasant, fruitfull, and commodious, soile, &c. by John Brereton. 4to. 1602.

2. A prosperous Voyage in the Discovery of the North Part of Virginia. By Captain George Weymouth. 4to. 1605.

3. Nova Britannia, offering most excellent Fruites by planting in Virginia. 4to. 1609.—This tract was entered in the Stationers' Register, Feb. 16, 1608-9.

4. Virginia valued by the Description of the Maine Land of Florida, her next neighbour; translated out of Portuges. By Richard Hackluit. 4to. 1609.

5. A good Speed to Virginia. By Robert Gray. Entered in the Stationers' Register, May 3, 1609.

6. A True and Sincere Declaration of the Purpose and Ends of the Plantation begun in Virginia, &c. 4to. 1610. This tract will be more particularly noticed hereafter.—See p. 15.

7. "A Sermon preached in London before the Right Hon. Lord Delaware, Lord Gov'nor and Captayn Gen'rall of Virginia, and others of his Ma'ties Councell for that Kingdome, 21st of Feb. last, entitled, A Newe Year's Gifte to Virginia." Entered in the Stationers' Register, March 19, 1609-10.

8. Virginia News;—published before Oct. 1st, 1610, as appears by an assignment of that date, in the Stationers' Register.

A new charter having been granted in May 1609, to the Company for making a plantation and settlement in Virginia, it was resolved by the Treasurer and Council of that Company to send thither immediately a large supply of men and provisions. Of the disaster which befel the fleet employed on that occasion, the following clear and succinct account has been given by a very sensible modern historian. To his narrative I shall sub-

9. A Discovery of the Bermudas, &c. (as in p. 22.) By Sil. Jourdan. 4to. 1610. Republished with additions, in 1613.

10. A true Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie of Virginea, &c. (as in p. 21.) Entered in the Stationers' Register, Nov. 8, 1610.

11. The Relac'on of the Right Hon'ble the Lord Delaware, Lord Gove'nour of the Colony planted in Virginia, made to the LL. and others of the Counsell of Virginia, touchinge his unexpected returne home, &c. 4to. 1611. In the Bodleian Library. Entered in the Stationers' Register, July 6, 1611.

12. A Ballad, called THE LAST NEWS FROM VIRGINIA, being an Encouragement to all others to follow that noble Enterprize, &c. Entered in the Stationers' Register by John Wright, August 16, 1611.

13. The New Life of Virginia, declaring the former Success and present State of that Plantation. 4to. 1612.

14. The Proceedings of the English Colony in Virginia, from 1606 to this present Year 1612. By W. S. [W. Strachey.] 4to. 1612.—This list, I believe, is far from being complete.

In a letter written to the Earl of Shrewsbury, June 8, 1609, Dr. Tobias Mathew, Archbishop of York, says;—“ Of Virginia there be so many tractates, divine, humane, historicaall, politicaall, or call them as you please, as no further intelligence I dare desire.” Lodge's Illustrations, &c. iii. 371.

join the more minute and particular relation of one engaged in this adventure, as well as that printed by authority of the Council; which will fully shew that the incidents attending it suggested to Shakspeare the leading circumstance of this comedy:

"The New Charter," says the Reverend Mr. Stith, "was granted to the Earls of Salisbury, Suffolk, SOUTHAMPTON, Pembroke, and other peers, to the number of twenty-one; to the Honourable George Percy, and Francis West, Esquires; to Sir Humphry Weld, Lord Mayor of London, and ninety-eight other knights; and to Dr. Mathew Sutcliffe, with a great multitude more of doctors, esquires, gentlemen, officers, merchants, and citizens, together with many corporations and companies of London. So many persons of great power, interest, and fortune, engaging in the enterprise, and the Lord Delaware with the other gentlemen of distinction being appointed to the several offices [of Captain-General, &c.] soon drew in such large sums of money, that they dispatched away Sir Thomas Gates, [who had been constituted by the Council for Virginia; Lieutenant-General,] Sir George Somers, [Admiral,] and Captain Newport, [Vice-Admiral,] with nine ships and five hundred people. These three gentlemen had each of them a commission,—who first arrived to call in the old. But because they could not agree for place, it was concluded that

they should all go in one ship, called the **SEA-VENTURE**. They sailed from England the latter end of May,* 1609; but the 25th of July the **ADMIRAL-SHIP WAS PARTED FROM THE REST OF THE FLEET** by the tail of a hurricane, having on board the three commanders, an hundred and fifty men, their new commission and bills of lading, together with all manner of instructions and directions, and the best part of their provisions. She arrived not, but was foundered at Bermudas, as shall be hereafter related. A small catch likewise perished in the hurricane; but the seven other ships came safe" [to Virginia].†

* * * * *

" It hath been before said (continues the historian) that the Admiral-ship, with Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, and Captain Newport, on board, was separated from the rest of the fleet in a storm. She was so racked and torn by the violent working of the sea, and became so shattered and leaky, that the water rose in the hold above two tire of hogsheads; and they were obliged to stand up to their middles, with kettles, buckets, and other vessels, to bail it out. And thus they bailed and pumped three days and nights, without intermission; and yet the water seemed rather to gain upon them than decrease. At last,

* This is not quite correct. They sailed in fact, as will be seen hereafter, on the 8th of June.

+ History of the first discovery and settlement of Virginia, by William Stith, A.M. 8vo. 1747, pp. 101-102.

all being utterly spent with labour, and seeing no hope, in man's apprehension, but of presently sinking, THEY RESOLVED TO SHUT UP THE HATCHES, and to commit themselves to the mercy of the sea and God's good providence. In this dangerous and desperate state, some who had good and comfortable waters, fetched them, and drank to one another, as TAKING THEIR LAST LEAVES, till a more happy and joyful meeting in the other world. But it pleased God in his most gracious providence, so to guide their ship to her best advantage, that they were all preserved and came safe to shore.

" For Sir George Somers had sat all this time upon the poop, scarce allowing himself leisure either to eat or sleep, cunning the ship, and keeping her upright, or she must otherwise, long before this, have foundered. As he there sat looking wishfully about, he most happily and unexpectedly descried land: This welcome news, as if it had been a voice from heaven, hurried them all above hatches, to see what they could scarce believe. But thereby improvidently forsaking their work, they gave such an advantage to their greedy enemy, the sea, that they were very nigh being swallowed up. But none were now to be urged to do his best. Although they knew it to be BERMUDAS, a place then dreaded and shunned by all men, yet they spread all the sail, and did every thing else, in their power, to reach the land.

It was not long before the ship STRUCK UPON A ROCK, but a surge of the sea cast her from thence, and so from one to another, till she was MOST LUCKILY THROWN UP BETWEEN TWO, AS UPRIGHT AS IF SHE HAD BEEN ON THE STOCKS. And now the danger was, lest the billows, overtaking her, should in an instant have dashed and shivered her to pieces. But all on a sudden the wind lay, and gave place to a calm, and the sea became so peaceable and still, that with the greatest conveniency and ease they unshipped all their goods, victuals, and people, and in their boats, with extreme joy, almost to amazement, ARRIVED IN SAFETY WITHOUT THE LOSS OF A MAN, although more than a league from the shore.*

" How these islands came by the name of BERMUDAS, is not certainly agreed. Some say, that they were so named after John Bermudaz, a Spaniard, who first discovered them about the year 1522. Others report, that a Spanish ship called THE BERMUDAS was cast away upon them, as she was carrying hogs to the West-Indies; which swam ashore and increased to incredible numbers. But they had been in all times before infamous and terrible to mariners, for the wreck of many Spanish, Dutch, and French vessels. They were therefore, with the usual elegance of the

* One of the persons on board, whose narrative will be hereafter quoted, says, " only half a mile."

sea style, by many called THE ISLE OF DEVILS, and were esteemed the hell or purgatory of seamen, the most dangerous, unfortunate, and forlorn place in the world.

" But the safe arrival of this company is not more strange and providential, than their feeding and support was beyond all their hopes or expectation : for they found it *the richest, pleasantest, and most healthful place they had ever seen.* Being safe on shore, they dispersed themselves, some to search the islands for food and water, and others to get ashore what they could, from the ship. Sir George Somers had not ranged far, before he found such a fishery, that in half an hour he took with a hook and line as many as sufficed the whole company. In some places they were so thick in the coves, and so big, that they were afraid to venture in amongst them.--- Two of these rock-fish would have loaded a man, neither could any where be found fatter or more excellent fish than they were. Besides, there were infinite numbers of mullets, pilchards, and other small fry ; and by making a fire in the night they would take vast quantities of large craw-fish. As for hogs, they found them in that abundance, that at their first hunting they killed thirty-two. And there were likewise multitudes of excellent birds in their seasons ; and the greatest facility to make their cabins with palmeta leaves. This caused them to live in such plenty, ease, and comfort, that many

forgot all other places, and never desired to return from thence."*

Such is the narrative collected from authenti^k papers of those times, and published at Williamsburg, about sixty years ago, by the historian of Virginia, which I have thought it proper to lay before the reader in the first instance, because it describes this misadventure in a very lively manner, and is, extremely well written. But from these facts, it must be acknowledged, no satisfactory and decisive conclusion can be drawn respecting the date of this play, unless it can be shewn that they were known by Shakspeare. I shall therefore proceed to state not only how, but when, he became acquainted with the peculiar circumstances attending this disaster, to which he has alluded in THE TEMPEST; so as by this means, with the aid of other documents, to ascertain precisely the time of its composition.

It has already been mentioned that seven ships of Sir George Somers's fleet got to the place of their destination, Virginia; and having landed about three hundred and fifty persons, they set sail for England. Two of them were wrecked and perished on the point of Ushant; and "the rest of the fleet (says a writer of those times) returned to England in 1610, ship after ship, laden with nothing but bad reports and letters of dis-

* Ibid. pp. 113, 114.

couragement ; and, which added the more to our
erosse, they brought us newes, that the ADMIRAL-
SHIP, with the two knig^ts and Captain Newport,
were missing, severed in a mightie storme out-
ward, and could not be heard of, which we there-
fore yeelded as lost for many moneths together; and
so that virgine voyage, as I may terme it, which
went out smiling on her lovers with pleasant lookes,
after her wearie travailes did thus return with a rent
and disfigured face, for which how justly her friends
took occasion of sorrow, and others to insult and
scoffe, let men of reason judge."*

The account of this disaster probably reached England some time in December 1609, and was brought either by Captain Smith, the former Governour of Virginia, who left it at Michaelmas in that year, or by the first of the five ships that arrived in an English port. To dispel the gloom which this ill news spread among the undertakers who had fitted out the fleet, the Council of Virginia very speedily issued out a pamphlet, which was published either in December 1609, or early in January 1609-10, with a view of preventing the bad effects that any exaggerated reports of this calamity might produce.

In this piece, after stating that Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, and Captain Newport, with seven ships and two pinnaces, sailed from Falmouth on the 8th of June [1609], they add,

* The New Life of Virginia, 4to. 1612.

that "in the height of the Canaries, short of the West-Indies 150 leagues, on St. James's day, a TERRIBLE TEMPEST overtook them, and lasted in extremity forty-eight hours, which scattered the whole fleet, and wherein some of them spent their masts, and others were much distressed." Within three days, (they say in substance) *four of the fleet met in consort*, and hearing no news of the Admiral, they bore away for the bay of Virginia, and arrived in the King's River on the 11th of August. In eleven days afterwards arrived two more; they having resolved to steer, not for Barwada, (as originally determined in case of separation,) but for that harbour; "which," (say the Council) "doubtless the Admiral himself did not observe, but obeyed his own directions, and is the true or probable cause of his being cast so far into suspicion; where [whereas] *perhaps* bound in with wind, or perhaps enforced to stay the masting or mending somewhat in his ship, torn or lost in the TEMPEST, we doubt not but by the mercy of God hee is safe, with the pinnace* which attended him, and shall both, or are by this time arrived at our colony."

Not long afterwards (this tract informs us) one of the pinnaces arrived in the river or bay of Virginia; making seven out of the nine vessels that had sailed from England. Four hundred

* This pinnace, which Mr. Stith calls a small CATCH, was lost.

persons were landed from the several ships; "who being put ashore without their Governour or any order from him, (all the commissioners and principal persons being aboord him,) no man would acknowledge a superior, nor could from this headlesse and unbridled multitude be any thing expected but disorder and ryot, nor any counsell prevent or foresee the successe of these wayes."

Still further to dispel the gloom which had arisen on this failure, after stating the difficulties the Spaniards had experienced in similar settlements, the Council add,—“ But to come hence to our purpose: That which seems to dishearten or shake our first grounds in this supplye, ariseth from two principal sources, of which one was the cause of the other; first, THE TEMPEST; and can any man expect to answer for that? next, the absence of the Governor, (an effect of the former,) *for the LOSS OF HIM IS IN SUSPENSE*, and much reason of his safetye against some doubt; and the hand of GOD reacheth all the earth.”

They further inform the publick, that to redeem the defects and misadventures of the last supply, they had resolved to send forth the Lord De la Ware as Governor, by the last of January [1609-10].*

* “ A true and sincere Declaration of the purpose and ends of the plantation begun in Virginia, of the degrees whieh it hath received, and meanes by which it hath been advanced; and the

Not content with giving this statement of their affairs, in the month of January or February 1609-10, they issued out a paper, which bears the title of

**" A PUBLICATION by the Counsell of Virginia,
touching the plantation there."**

" Howsoever it came to pass by God's appointment that governes all things, that the fleet of eight shippes lately sent to Virginea, by meanes the Admirall, wherein were shipped the chief Governours, Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Sommers, and Captain Newport, by tempestuous windes and forcible current were driven so farre to the west-ward, that they could not in so convenient time recover Cape Henrie, and the port in Virginea, as by returne of the same fleete to

resolution and conclusion of his Majesties Council of that Colony, for the constant and patient prosecution thereof, untill by the mercies of God it shall retribute a fruitfull harvest to the kingdom of heaven and this commonwealth. Set forth by the authority of the Governors and Councillors established for that plantation." 4to. 1610. This pamphlet was entered in the Stationers' Register by John Stepney on the 14th of December 1609, and was licensed by the Lord De la Ware, Sir Thomas Smith, [the Treasurer of the Company,] Sir Walter Cope, and Mr. Waterson, Warden of the Stationers' Company; and though, according to the custom of booksellers, with a forward aspect it bears the date of 1610, it is clear from this entry and the paragraph here quoted, that it was published either in Dec. 1609, or before Jan. 31, 1609-10.

answering the expectation of the Adventurers, in some measure;

“ By occasion whereof some few of those unruly youths sent thither, (beeing of most leaud and bad condition, and such as no ground can hold,) for want of good directions there were suffered by stealth to get aboard the shippes returning thence, and are come for England againe, giving out in all places where they come, (to colour their own misbehaviour and the cause of their retурне with some pretence,) most vile and scandalous reports, both of the country it self, and of the cariage of the business there:

“ Which hath also given occasion that sundry false rumours, and despightful speeches, have beene devised and given out by men that seeme of better sort, being such as lie at home, and doe gladly take all occasions to cheere them selves with the prevention of happy success in any action of publicke good, disgracing both the action and actors of such honourable enterprises, as whereof they neither know nor understand the true intents and honest ends;

“ Which howsoever for a time it may deterre and keepe backe the hands and helpe of many well-disposed men, yet men of wisdome and better resolution doe well conceive and know that these devices infused into the tongues and heades of such devisors, by the father of untruths, doe serve for nothing else but as a cloke to cover the

wretched and leaud prancks of the one sort, and the stupidity and backwardness of the other, to advance any commendable action that taxeth their purse, and tendeth not wholly to their own advantage.

“ And therefore those of his Majesties Counsell in this honourable plantation, the Lords, Knights, Gentlemen, and Merchants, interessed therein, rightly considering that as in all other good ser-viees, so in this, much losse and detriment may many waies arise and grow to the due meanes and manner of proceeding, which yet no way toucheth nor impeacheth the action it self, nor the ends of it, which do still remaine entire and safe upon the same grounds of those manifold christian duties, whereon it was first resolved, are so farre from yielding or giving way to any hindrance or impeachment of their cheerfull going on, that many of them, both honourable and worshipfull, have given their hands and subscribed to contribute againe and againe to new supplies, if need require.

“ And further they doe instantly prepare and make ready a certain number of good shippes with all necessaries, for the Right Honourable Lord De la Ware, who intendeth, (God assisting) to be ready with all expedition to second the aforesaid Generals, WHICH WE DOUBT NOT ARE LONG SINCE SAFELY ARRIVED AT THEIR WISHED PORT IN VIRGINIA.

* And for that former experience hath too dearely taught, how much and manie waies it hurteth, to suffer parents to disbourden them selves of lascivious sonnes, masters of bad servants, and wives of ill husbands, and soe to clogge the businesse with such an idle crue as did thrust them selves in the last voyage, that will rather starve for hunger, then lay their hands to any labour :

It is therefore resolved, that no such unnecessary person shall now be accepted, but onely such sufficient, honest, and good artificers, as

Smiths,	Bricklayers,
Shipwrights,	Mineral men,
Sturgeon-dressers,	Bakers,
Joyners,	Gun-founders,
Carpenters,	Fishermen,
Gardeners,	Plough-wrights,
Turners,	Brewers,
Coopers;	Sawyers,
Saltmakers,	Fowlers,
Ironmen, for furnasse and hammer,	Vine-dressers,
Brickmakers,	Surgeons, and

Physicians for the body, and learned Divines to instruct the Colony, and to teach the Infidels to worship the true God : of which so many as will repaire to the house of Sir Thomas Smith, Treasurer of the Company, to proffer their service in this action, before the number be full, and will put in good suretie to be readie to attend the said

Honourable Lord in the voyage, shall be entertained with those reasonable and good conditions, as shall answer and be agreeable to each man's sufficiency in his severall profession."*

In April or May, 1610, Lord De la Ware, with three ships, sailed for Virginia, and arrived at James-Town on the 9th of June. Here first he learned, that Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers were not lost, as had been supposed in England, the two knights having arrived at Virginia about a fortnight before him, in two cedar vessels which they had built at Bermuda, from which they sailed on the 10th of May, after having spent about nine months on that island. Shortly afterwards, (June 19, 1610, †) the new Govenour sent Sir George Somers for a fresh supply of victuals to Bermuda, where he died, Nov. 9, 1610, as appears by an inquisition taken at Dorchester on the 25th of July, 1611.‡

* Imprinted, at London, by Thomas Hareland, for William Welby, and are to be sold at his shop in Paul's Church-yard, at the signe of the Swanne, 1610. [probably Jan. 1609-10]. a half-sheet.

† Mr. Strachey's letter, dated James-Town, July 7, 1610. MSS. Harl. 7009. art. 12. fol. 35.

‡ Escaet. 10 Jac. p. 2. n. 127.

His body was landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, and he was buried in the church or cemetery of Whitchurch Canonicorum, on the 4th of June, 1611; as appears by an entry in the Register of that parish, which the Rev. Mr. Tucker, in the year 1802, obligingly examined, at my request.

During a great part of the year 1610, the fate of Somers and Gates was not known in England; but the latter, having been sent home by Lord Delaware, arrived there in August or September, 1610; and before the end of that year, in order to quiet the minds of those who were concerned in this adventure, and to assure the publick of the safety of Sir George Somers, the Council of Virginia published a Narrative * of the disasters which had befallen the fleet that had been sent out in 1609, from materials furnished by Sir Thomas Gates.†

Previously however to its appearance, one Jourdan, who probably returned from Virginia in the same ship with that gentleman, pursuing a course which we have seen practised in our own time, and availing himself of the publick curiosity, anticipated the authentick account by hastily drawing up a narrative of this disastrous voyage,

* "A true Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Virginia, with a confutation of such scandalous reports as have tended to the disgrace of so worthy an enterprise. Published by advise and direction of the Councell of Virginia." 4to. 1610.

† In "the New Life of Virginia," 4to. 1612, this narrative is ascribed to Sir Thomas Gates. Mr. Strachey speaks of it as the relation of him and those associated with him in command. In a subsequent page, I have called this tract, "Gates's Narrative," as unquestionably a great part of the materials was furnished by him; but I suspect that it was written by Sir Edwin Sandys, the well known author of *EUROPE SPECULUM*, and a zealous promoter of the settlement in Virginia.

which appears to have been issued out very expeditiously ; for his Dedication, which is addressed “to Master John Fitzjames, Esquire, Justice of Peace in Dorsetshire,” is dated on the 13th of October, 1610 ; but from an apprehension, doubtless, that his publication might have been forbidden by authority, if any previous notice of it had been given, this pamphlet was published without a license, not being entered in the Stationers’ Register. It is entitled, “ A Discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise called THE ISLE OF DIVERS; by Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Sommers, and Captain Newport, with divers others.”* Though the substance of this narrative has already been given in Mr. Stith’s detail of the disaster produced by the storm of July, 1609, it is necessary to repeat some part of it, because here and in the subsequent tract published by authority, it was, that Shakspeare found those materials of which he has availed himself in the comedy now under our consideration.

Jourdan, after informing his reader that he was one of those who sailed from England with Sir George Somers and Sir Thomas Gates, in the Sea-adventure,† proceeds to relate the circumstances of the storm which happened on the 25th of July, 1609. They were bound for Virginia, and at that time in thirty degrees, north latitude.

* By Sil. Jourdan. 4to. 1610.

† “ A vessel of about 300 ton,” says Howes, in his Continuation of Stowe’s Chronicle, 1615.

The whole crew, amounting to one hundred and fifty persons, weary with pumping, had given all for lost, and began to drink their strong waters, **AND TO TAKE LEAVE OF EACH OTHER**, intending to commit themselves to the mercy of the sea. Sir George Somers, who had sat three days and nights on the poop, with no food and little rest, at length descried land, and encouraged them (**MANY FROM WEARINESS HAVING FALLEN ASLEEP**) to continue at the pumps. They complied; and fortunately the ship was driven and **JAMMED BETWEEN TWO ROCKS**, "fast lodged and locked for further budging." One hundred and fifty persons got ashore; and by means of their boat and skiff, for this was "half a mile from land," they saved such part of their goods and provisions as the water had not spoiled, all the tackling and much of the iron of their ship, which was of great service to them in fitting-out another vessel to carry them to Virginia.

"But our delivery," says Jourdan, "was not more strange in falling so opportunely and happily upon the land, as [than] our feeding and provision was, beyond our hopes, and all men's expectations, most admirable; for the Islands of the Bermudas, as every man knoweth that hath heard or read of them, were **NEVER INHABITED** by any christian or heathen people, but ever esteemed and reputed a most prodigious and **INCHANTED PLACE**, affording nothing but gusts, storms, and

foul weather; which made every navigator and mariner to avoid them as Scylla and Charybdis, or as they would shunne the Divell himself: and no man was ever heard to make for this place, but as, against their wils, they have, by storms and dangerousnesse of the rocks lying seven leagues into the sea, suffered shipwracke. Yet did we finde there **THE AYRE SO TEMPERATE** and the **COUNTRY SO ABOUNDANTLY FRUITFULL** of all fit necessaries for the sustentation and preservation of man's life, that, most in a manner of all our provision of bread, beere, and victuall, being quite spoyled in lying long drowned in salt water, notwithstanding we were there for the space of nine months (few days over or under) we were not only well refreshed, comforted, and with good satiety contented, but out of the abundance thereof provided us some reasonable quantity and proportion of provision to carry us for Virginia, and to maintain our selves and that company we found there: ---- wherefore my opinion sincerely of this island is, that whereas it hath beene, and is still accounted the most dangerous, unfortunate, and forlorne place of the world, it is in truth the richest, healthfullest, and pleasing land, (the quantity and bignesse thereof considered,) and merely naturall, as ever man set foote upon."

On the 28th of July they landed. They all then began to search for provision. In half an hour Sir Thomas Gates took as many fishes with

hookes, as sufficed the whole company for one day. When a man stept into the water, the fish came round about him. " These fishes were very fat and sweete, and of that proportion and bignesse, that three of them will conveniently lade two men : those we called **ROCK-FISH**. Besides, there are such abundance of mullets, that with a seane might be taken at one draft one thousand at the least ; and infinite store of pilchards." There was also a great plenty of cray-fish. The country afforded such an abundance of hogs, that Sir George Somers, who hunted them, brought in thirty-two at one time.

" There is fowle in great abundance in the islands, where they breed, that there hath beene taken in two or three howres a thousand at the least, being of the bignesse of a good pigeon.

" Another sea-fowle there is, that lyeth in little holes in the ground, like unto a coney-hole, and are in great numbers ; exceeding good meat, very fat and sweet, (those we had in the winter,) and their egges are white, and of that bignesse, that they are not to be knowne from hen-egges."

The birds he describes as exceedingly tame : they came so near them, that they killed many of them with a stick. They found great store of tortoises or turtles ; prickled pears in abundance, which continued green on the trees all the year. The island, he adds, was supplied with many

mulberry trees, white and red; palms and cedar trees; and no venomous creature was found there.

Having built their new cedar bark, they set sail from the Bermudas, May 10, 1610, (leaving, as appears by other accounts, three men behind,) and landed on the coast of Virginia, May 24, when they found sixty persons only living and in distress. On this account they determined to return to England; and accordingly embarked, June 8, 1610, at James-Town for Newfoundland, to get provisions for their voyage; when fortunately, having got half way down the river, they met Lord De la Ware, who arrived from England with three ships. After a while, Lord De la Ware sent Sir George Somers, "a man of sixty years of age," to Bermuda, for provisions. He embarked at James-Town in the small cedar bark of thirty tons, which he had built at Bermuda, June 19, 1610; and the writer concludes with a hearty wish for his good success and safe return.

To dissipate the gloom and despondency occasioned by the disaster of the former year, and to shew the practicability and use of settling a colony in Virginia, were the principal objects of the pamphlet published under the authority of the Council in the latter end of 1610; which is written with a vigour, animation, and even, eloquence, rarely found in the tracts of those times. Though that part of it with which alone we are concerned, or in

other words, which relates to Bermuda, differs but little in substance from the account that preceded it, relating nearly the same facts and events in much better language, it is yet necessary to be briefly noticed; because Shakspeare assuredly would not neglect to peruse this authentick narrative. It has indeed an additional claim to our attention; for the writer of this tract, having compared the disastrous tempest which wrecked Sir George Somers and his associates on the island of Bermuda, and their subsequent escape from the immediate destruction which threatened them, to those dramatick compositions in which similar changes of fortune are represented, and sorrow and mirth artfully intermingled, perhaps suggested to Shakspeare the thought of forming these adventures into a play; and to him, in some measure, we may have been indebted for this delightful comedy.

“ True it is,” (says this Narrative,) “ that when Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, and Capaine Newport, were in the height of 27, and the 24th of July, 1609, there arose such a storme, as if Jonas had been flying unto Tarshish: the heavens were obscured, and made an Egyptian night of three daies perpetuall horror; the women lamented; the hearts of the passengers failed; the experience of the sea-captaines was amased; the skill of the marriners was confounded; the ship most violently leaked; and though two thou-

sand tunne of water by pumping from Tuesday noone till Fryday noone was discharged, notwithstanding, the ship was halfe filled with water: and those which laboured to keepe others from drowning, were halfe drowned themselves in labouring. But GOD, that heard Jonas crying out of the belly of hell, he pittied the distresses of his servants; for behold, in the last period of necessitie, Sir George Summers descryed land, which was by so much the more joyfull, by how much their danger was despairefull. The islands on which they fell, were the Bermudos; a place hardly ACCESSIONABLE, through the invironing rocks and dangers: notwithstanding, they were forced to runne their ship on shoare, which through GOD's providence fell betwixt two rockes, that caused her to stand firme, and not immediately to be broken; GOD continuing his mercie unto them, that with their long boats they transported to land before night all their company, men, women, and children, to the number of one hundred and fiftie; they carryed to shoare all the provision of unspent and unspoyled victuals, all their furniture and tackling of the ship, leaving nothing but bared ribs as a pray unto the ocean.

" These islands of the Bermudos have ever been accounted as an INCHAUNTED pile of rockes, and A DESERT INHABITATION FOR DIVELS; but all the fairies of the rocks were but flocks of birds, and all the divels that haunted the woods were

but heards of swine. Yea, and when Acosta, in his first booke of the hystories of the Indies, averreth, that though in the Continent there were diverse beasts and cattell, yet in the islands of Hispaniola, Jamaica, Marguarita, and Dominica, there was not one hoofe, it increaseth the wonder how our people in the Bermudos found such abundance of hogs, that for nine moneths' space they plentifullly sufficed; and yet the number seemed not much diminished.—Again; as in the great famine of Israell GOD commanded Elias to flie to the brooke Cedron, and there fed him by ravens, so GOD provided for our disconsolate people in the midst of the sea by foules; but with an admirable difference: unto Elias the ravens brought meat, unto our men the foules brought themselves for meate; for when they whistled or made any strange noyse, the foules would come and sit on their shoulders; they would suffer them selves to be taken and weighed by our men, who would make choise of the fattest and fairest, and let flie the leane and lightest: an accident I take it, that cannot be parallel'd by any hystorie, except when GOD sent abundance of quayles to feed his Israel in the barren wildernesse. Lastly, they found the berries of cedar, the palmeto tree, the prickle peare, sufficient fish, plenty of tortoisises, and divers other kinds which sufficed to sustaine nature. They found diversity of woods, which ministred materials for the building of two pinaces, according

to the direction of the three provident Gover-
hours.

“ Consider all these things together. At the instant of neede they descriyed land ; halfe an hower more had buried their memorial in the sea. If they had fel by night, what expectation of light from an uninhabited desart ? They fell betwixt a labyrinth of rockes, which they conceive are mouldred into the sea by thunder and lightning. This was not Ariadne’s threed, but the direct line of God’s providence. If it had not beene so NEERE LAND, their companie or provision had perished by water ; if they had not found hogs, and foule, and fish, they had perished by famine : if there had not beene fuell, they had perished by want of fire : if there had not beene timber, they could not have transported them selves to Virginia, but must have beene forgotten for ever. *Nimium timet, qui Deo non credit* ; he is too impiously fearefull, that will not trust in God so powerfull.

“ What is there in all this TRAGICALL-COMA-
DIE, that should discourage us with impossibilitie
of the enterprise ? when of all the fleete, one
only ship by a secret leake was indangered, and
yet in the gulfe of despaire was so graciously pre-
served. *Quæ videtur pœna, est medecina* ; that
which we accompt a punishment of evill, is but a
medecine against evill.”*

* “ A true Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Vir-

From the preceding statements it appears, that during a great part of the year 1610, it was supposed in England, that the ship containing the Lieutenant-Governor of the settlement in Virginia, and Sir George Somers the Admiral, which had been separated from the rest of the fleet, was lost; but Shakspeare, when he wrote his play, **KNEW THAT IT WAS SAFE**: a circumstance ascertained by Jourdan's pamphlet, and that issued out by the Council; and therefore this comedy could not have been written till after their publication, or at least the publication of one of them: unless we suppose that our poet had the very earliest intelligence of the arrival of Sir Thomas Gates in August or September in that year: and even on that supposition the play must have been composed subsequently to that period. However that may have been, it is reasonable to suppose that it was not produced on the stage till the winter or spring of 1611, and we may safely ascribe it to the early part of that year. That it was performed before the middle of 1611, we have already seen.*

It now remains to shew that Shakspeare, when he wrote **THE TEMPEST**, had in view the particular disaster of which so ample an account has been given.

ginia, &c. *ut supra*, 4to. 1610. This pamphlet was entered in the Stationers' Register by William Barret, Nov. 8, 1610; being licensed by Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir George Capon, Mr. Ric. Martyn, and the Wardens.

* Under a former article.

To fix as nearly as possible the exact time of his writing it, I have said that he knew that the Admiral-ship was safe; and this appears by the following lines, which manifestly allude to that circumstance and several others attending the tempest that dispersed Sir George Somers's fleet, and finally wrecked the vessel he was in, on the island of Bermuda;

“ PROSPERO. Hast thou, spirit,
“ Perform’d to point the tempest that I bade thee?
“ ARIEL. To every article.
“ I boarded the KING’S SHIP; now on the beak,
“ Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
“ I flamed amazement.----
“ PRO. Why, that’s my spirit.
“ But was not this NIGH SHORE?
“ ARI. CLOSE BY, my master.
“ PRO. But ARE THEY, Ariel, SAFE?
“ ARI. NOT A HAIR PERISH’D;
“ On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
“ But fresher than before; and, as thou bad’st me,
“ In troops I have dispers’d them ’bout the isle.---
* * * * * * * * * * * * *
“ PRO. Of THE KING’S SHIP,
“ The mariners, say, how thou hast dispos’d,
“ And all the rest o’ the fleet?
“ ARI. SAFELY IN HARBOUR
“ IS THE KING’S SHIP; in the DEEP NOOK ----,
“ ----- THERE SHE’S HID;
“ The mariners all under hatches stow’d;

" Whom with a charm, join'd to their suffer'd
 labour,
 " I have left asleep : and for the rest o' the fleet,
 " Which I dispers'd, they all have met again,
 " And are upon the Mediterranean flote
 " Bound sadly home for Naples ;
 " SUPPOSING THAT THEY SAW THE KING'S SHIP
 WRECK'D,
 " AND HIS GREAT PERSON PERISH."

It is obvious, that we have here a ~~direct~~^{covert} allusion to several circumstances minutely described in the papers quoted in the preceding pages; to the circumstance of the Admiral-ship of Sir George Somers's fleet, after a tremendous tempest, being jammed between two of the Bermuda rocks, and " fast lock'd," as Jourdan expresses it, " for further budging;"* to the disaster happening very near the shore, and not a single person having perished;† to the dispersion of the rest of the ships; to their meeting again, as the Council of the Virginia Company have it, " in consort;"‡ and to all those who were thus dispersed and thus met again, being " bound sadly" for Virginia, supposing that the vessel which carried their Governour was lost, and that his " great person had perished."§ In various other passages in the second Act,—where the preservation of

* See p. 23. † pp. 23 and 30. ‡ p. 23. † p. 14. § p. 13.

Alonzo and his companions is termed “miraculous;”—where Stephano asks, “have we DEVILS here?”—where the same person makes a very free use of his bottle, and liberally imparts it to Caliban and Trinculo;*—where it is said, “though this island seem to be DESERT, UNINHABITABLE, and almost INACCESSIBLE, it must needs be of subtle, tender, and delicate temperance;” that “the air breathes most sweetly,” and that “here is every thing advantageous to life;” we find evident allusions to the extraordinary escape of Somers and his associates, and to Jourdan’s and Gates’s descriptions of Bermuda;† as, in the first scene of the play, the circumstance of the sailors and passengers taking leave of each other, and bidding farewell to their wives and children, was manifestly suggested by the earlier of those narratives.‡

Having thus, I hope decisively, ascertained the date of this comedy, it is unnecessary to consider any other of the notes of time, which it may furnish. In this light the Masque, in the fourth Act, has been represented; having been supposed to

* In the original, indeed, strongwaters are drunk on ship-board by those who conceived that the ship was sinking; in the play, Stephano’s liquor is sack, and it is drunk on the island after his escape. But Shakspeare, when he borrowed hints from others, often made such slight changes. Here, the change is easily accounted for: that pleasantry in which he delighted, could not with any propriety have been introduced among men, who supposed themselves at the point of death.

† pp. 24, 28. ‡ p. 23.

refer to the consummation (in 1610) of the marriage of the young Earl of Essex with Lady Frances Howard,* to whom he had been betrothed in 1606: but, not to insist on their cohabitation having taken place in the year 1609, as appears from the depositions in the suit for a divorce instituted by the Countess some years afterwards, this masque may be more justly as well as more obviously accounted for, by the prevailing fashion of the period when I have shewn it was written; a fashion which gave birth to a similar exhibition in the play of **TIMON OF ATHENS**, produced not long before. Equally inconclusive is the circumstance of the exhibition of the dead Indian, alluded to in the second Act, which, as I have already observed, proves nothing precisely; for it might have taken place at any time between 1605 and 1611. *Non tali auxilio --- tempus eget.*

Dryden, probably on the authority of Sir William D'Avenant, tells us, that **THE TEMPEST** was a very popular and successful play; which may well be believed, when it is considered, that, in addition to its own intrinsick excellence, it had also the adventitious merit of temporary allusion and reference to interesting circumstances, which had been the subject of discourse during an entire

* Observations on **THE TEMPEST**, [by Mr. Holt] 8vo. 1749, p. 17. That writer, erroneously supposing this consummation to have taken place in 1610, seems here to ascribe this play to that year: afterwards (p. 67) he places it in 1614.

year preceding its representation ; topicks so embellished by poesy, and so blended with fictions of the happiest kind, that a single disastrous event appears to have been converted by the magical hand of Shakspeare almost into a Fairy Tale.

F I N I S.

A P P E N D I X.

AN extraordinary circumstance induces me to add some observations to the preceding tract.— Early in the last year a few copies of it having been printed without any view of publication, they were distributed among my friends and acquaintance, accompanied with an entreaty, written in each copy, that no part of it should be communicated to the publick. Such was the import of my request, though not couched precisely in these words. Notwithstanding this request, it has been reviewed, on the first of January 1809, in one of the monthly publications; and a minute account has been given of all the proofs here adduced for the purpose of shewing the origin of the title and part of the story of Shakspeare's *TEMPEST*, and of ascertaining the time when it was written. On the propriety of this proceeding I shall not enlarge; more especially, as I have learned that the writer in question was induced to take this step, in consequence of verbal misinformation conveyed to him, I know not by whom, by which he considered himself released from the restriction which my written request was intended to impose. The author of the pa-

per alluded to, however, having asserted, that the foregoing discovery, as he is pleased to call it, was suggested many years ago by Mr. Capell; and a principal object of this premature publication seeming to have been, to prevent my erroneously supposing that I have any claim to it, I take an early opportunity of examining whether his notion on this subject is founded in truth, or on an entire misapprehension of the import and object of what has been stated in the preceding pages.

And, to avoid all confusion and misunderstanding, I will first shew what this discovery is **not**, and then, what it **is**. The discovery which I pretend to have made, is **not**,—that Sir George Somers, having in 1609 been shipwrecked on one of the Bermuda islands, where he died,—and various accounts of those islands having been afterwards published, in which they are represented as having been formerly considered to be “enchanted, and inhabited by witches and devils, which grew by reason of accustomed monstrous thunder, storm, and tempest, near unto them,”—Shakspeare was hence induced, *some years afterwards*, in his comedy of **THE TEMPEST**, to characterise Bermoothes (or Bermudas) by the epithet—**STILL-VEX'D**; and that in the formation of this play, the **DELINERATION OF SYCORAX AND HER SORCERIES**, **THE CHARACTER OF CALIBAN**, and **THE MAGICK OF PROSPERO**, were derived from the same fountain,

that is; from the accounts of the Bermudas. This, I say, is NOT what I pretend to have discovered; but

That the tremendous storm, which in July, 1609, separated and dispersed the fleet of ships that then sailed for Virginia, under the command of Sir George Somers and others, and finally wrecked his vessel on one of the Bermuda islands,—together with the peculiar incidents and circumstances attending that dispersion and shipwreck, gave rise to, and were the immediate origin of, the play of **THE TEMPEST**, and the title by which it was distinguished;—that to these incidents there is a covert reference in various passages of that comedy;—and that the fate of Somers not having been known in England for about fifteen months after he left it, that is, not till about September or October in the year 1610, during all which time it was feared, and generally believed, that he was lost; and the poet, as appears from a passage in his play, having known that he had landed on one of the Bermuda islands in safety; it necessarily follows, that this comedy was written after the news of that event had reached England; and, as I know that it had “a being and a name” in the autumn of 1611, the date of the play is fixed and ascertained with uncommon precision, between the end of the year 1610 and the Autumn of 1611; and it may with great probability be ascribed to the Spring of the latter year.—This is what I undertook

to prove, and this I presume to say, I have proved.

But, says the writer in question, all this may be true; but this is not Mr. Malone's discovery, but Mr. Capell's, and by way of proving the truth of this assertion, the following passage from that gentleman's Notes on Shakspeare has been adduced;—vol. ii. part ii. p. 58; 4to.

“ The idea of Ariel's CHARACTER, of his performances at least, which are describ'd in what precedes this similitude, [“ the fever of the mad,”] was catched from Haklyit, as will be evident to a viewer of that extract which is first [second] of those are made in THE SCHOOL [of Shakspeare] from that writer: and by another, enter'd too in that work, is that epithet's fitness [“ STILL-VERX'D”] confirm'd, which at p. 14, 13, [i. e. p. 14. l. 13, of Mr. Capell's edition of Shakspeare's plays] characterizes the islands, there intitl'd Bermoothes, in the extract—Bermudas.”

[Dr. Johnson once said, speaking of Mr. Capell's Preface to his edition, “ If the man would have come to me, I would have endeavoured to endow his purpose with words;’ for as it is, ‘ he doth gabble monstrously.’ With the same charitable view it may be observed, that the first of the extracts here referred-to, which is taken from the third volume of Hakluyt's Voyages, contains merely a description of the light, that, in storms, sometimes runs “ upon the top of the maine-yarde.

and maine-maste," and is denominated, according to that writer, *cuerpo santo*. The second extract referred-to, is, a passage in a play of Thomas Middleton's, entitled ANY THING FOR A QUIET LIFE, in which the Bermuda islands are said to have been formerly infested with "thunder, with frightful lightning, and amazing noises :" "but now, (adds the speaker,) the enchantment broke, 'tis the land of peace, where hogs and tobacco yield fair increase." This comedy was not printed till 1662; but appears, from internal evidence, to have been written about the year 1619, three years after Shakspeare's death.]

" But though (proceeds Mr. Capell) we have in
 " honesty given this extract, [that quoted from
 " Middleton's play,] and said of it as above, 'tis
 " not from an opinion that the compound referr'd
 " to [“still-vex'd”] sprang from thence; which
 " should rather have been the offspring of some
 " fuller and LATER relations, by print or otherwise,
 " WHICH SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN GATHERED
 " EARLIER THAN 1612,—PERHAPS LATER. These
 " are the reasons : In 1609, Sir George Sommers,
 " (of whom the islands were also called Sommer
 " islands,) the first Englishman certainly, and for
 " aught appears, the first European, who set his
 " foot on them, was cast upon them by ship-
 " wreck ; stay'd a year on them; return'd to
 " them again from Virginia, and then dy'd on
 " them. That colony calls them within its limits;
 " and the then majority of it sold them to some'

" particulars, members of their society; who in
 " April 1612, 'sent thither a ship with sixty per-
 " sons, who arrived, and remayn'd there very
 " safely.' The furnisher of these particulars and
 " of the extract that follows them, speaking of
 " the islands themselves, says further, 'they
 " were of all nations said and supposed to be
 " enchanted and inhabited with witches and devils,
 " which grew by reason of accustomed monstrous
 " thunder, storme and tempest, neere unto them.'
 " Now as these particulars must, from the nature
 " of them, have been the subject as well of
 " writings as talk, at the time they were pass-
 " ing, the presumption is, FIRST, that the afore-
 " mention'd epithet [“still-vex'd”] rose from
 " them; and NEXT, that *they* were also SUGGES-
 " TERS OF SYCORAX AND HER SORCERIES, OF
 " THE PRETERNATURAL BEING SUBJECTED TO
 " HER, AND OF PROSPERO'S MAGICK; which, if
 " it be allow'd, then is this play prov'd by it
 " a late composition; and weight added to the
 " opinion that makes it the Poet's last; a cir-
 " cumstance that might determine the Players to
 " place it foremost in their publish'd collection.
 " —Stratford, his place of birth and of residence,
 " was burnt in 1614, which should in reason
 " have drawn him thither, and in 16 he dy'd.
 " The extracts, and what relates to these islands,
 " we have from Howe's Continuation of Stowe;
 " (edition 1631, fol. b. 1.) their name in him is
 " Bermodes and Bermodies, which, as well as

" Bermoothes, (the poet's spelling,) are defective
 " attempts to give in English the Spanish sound
 " of Bermudas."

This is the whole that Mr. Capell has said upon this subject; and between this statement and mine the writer in question, on repeated and mature consideration, sees so little difference, that in his apprehension, the passage just now quoted fully warrants his conclusion; namely, that the discovery which I pretend to have made, was previously made by Mr. Capell.

The valiant Captain Fluellen strenuously maintains, that a complete and perfect comparison may be instituted between the birthplace of his hero, Henry the Fifth, and that of Alexander the Great, because there is a river in Macedon and another in Monmouth, and "there is salmons in both." If the honest Welchman's reasoning be just, then certainly the foregoing statement of Mr. Capell,—that the notions generally entertained in Shakspeare's life-time concerning the Bermuda islands, gave birth to the epithet *still-vex'd*, the magick of Prospero, &c. exactly quadrates with mine;—for the name of Sir George Somers occurs in both. Another authority also, of equal weight, may be adduced to the same purpose. Several years ago I heard the late Mr. Potter, not indeed a Welch Captain, but a Welch Judge, make a very ingenious speech in the style and manner of Mr. Dunning, the celebrated barrister, to prove that **TWO AND TWO DID NOT MAKE FOUR.** I strongly sus-

pect that the applause which the imitative efforts of that lively gentleman obtained from his audience, may have induced our critick to try his strength in a similar way; and certainly if that were his object, he has not been wholly unsuccessful, having very closely followed his archetype, though not perhaps with the same ingenuity.—These observations, however, are by no means intended as any disparagement of the learning and abilities of the writer, which I am perfectly ready to acknowledge; but of what avail are abilities, or learning, when such paradoxes are attempted to be maintained?

In a word, (for it is quite unnecessary to enter into any elaborate discussion on so clear a point,) whenever any rational man, in any of our Universities, who has been accustomed to compare and to deduce, shall be found, who is ready to subscribe to this writer's opinion, and thinks that the passage quoted from Mr. Capell's Notes, or any other written by that gentleman, affords any ground for believing that he—I will not say, thought, but had even the slightest suspicion, that the storm which dispersed Sir George Somers's fleet in the year 1609, and the subsequent wreck of his vessel on one of the Bermuda islands, gave rise in the mind of Shakspeare, to THE TEMPEST, and was the immediate origin of that comedy, I will then instantly relinquish the claim that I have presumed to make; but “in such a THEN I write a NEVER.”

The matter here in controversy lies in so narrow

a compass, that it admits of little illustration or amplification: where no arguments have been adduced in support of an opinion, there is nothing to be confuted. In some questions of a complex and difficult nature, when many specious observations are urged by ingenious men, in support of contrary tenets, an attentive consideration and sound judgment are requisite, to separate truth from falsehood, and to form a just decision;—but here are no opposing probabilities to be balanced, and no reasoning to be sifted and examined: on the one side, we have a series of connected proofs, all leading to the same conclusion; on the other a mere assertion, with scarcely one colourable suggestion to support it.

In the passage relied upon, as furnishing a decisive proof of what has been asserted, Sir George Somers, and the misfortune that befel him, as has been already observed, are indeed mentioned; but the notice of this gentleman, and of his shipwreck, is merely historical and incidental. The writer was naturally led to mention that circumstance, in order to attain the object that he had in view; which was only to shew that the opinions vulgarly entertained concerning the Bermuda islands gave rise to the magick of THE TEMPEST. Mr. Capell's language is in general so quaint, perverse, cloudy, and almost unintelligible, that two men of the quickest apprehension, and soundest judgment, might often find it extremely difficult to ascertain his

meaning ; and might perhaps, in many cases ascribe to the same passage interpretations of a totally opposite and contrary import : but here, in spite of all the awkwardness of his language, it is demonstrable, that the notice of Sir George Somers is merely incidental, and introduced solely as “ a greese or step” to the Bermuda Islands, and to the opinions which prevailed concerning them ; and he is extremely particular in the conclusion that he meant to have drawn from this statement ; which is not, that the storm of 1609, that wrecked Somers there, gave rise to the play ; but that the supposed enchantments belonging to those islands on which he was wrecked, gave rise, **SOME YEARS AFTERWARDS**, in the *first place*, to the epithet applied to them by the poet ; and *secondly*, produced the character of Caliban, the delineation of Sycorax and her Sorceries, and the magick of Prospero. This, and this only, it is manifest, is the conclusion which he meant to draw ; and for this purpose only was Sir George Somers, or his shipwreck at Bermuda, mentioned.

With respect to the notions entertained by the vulgar that the Bermudas were enchanted islands, and to the circumstances which made it probable that Shakspeare had those notions in view when he wrote this comedy ; and that the beings with which he has peopled his enchanted island, and the magick of Prospero, were in some measure derived from thence ; all this was known to Dr. Farmer,

Bishop Percy, Mr. Steevens, and others; (though not one of them could ascertain at what precise period Shakspeare attained the knowledge requisite for the formation of this drama:) and each of those gentlemen may be said to have anticipated the present writer in his discovery, with as much propriety as Mr. Capell.

The remark indeed of a much elder editor, Mr. Theobald, is so material on this part of our present disquisition, that I shall here transcribe it. It is observable, that his Note is on the very same words ("the *still-vex'd Bermoothes*,") which gave rise to the remark of Capell, inserted above:

" So this word [Bermoothes] has hitherto been
 " mistakenly written in all the books. There
 " are about 400 islands in North America, the
 " principal of which was called Bermuda, from a
 " Spaniard of that name, who first discovered them.
 " They are likewise called Summer Islands, from
 " SIR GEORGE SUMMERS, WHO IN 1609 MADE
 " THAT VOYAGE; and viewing them, probably first
 " brought the English acquainted with them, and
 " invited them afterwards to settle a plantation
 " there.—But why '*still-vex'd Bermudas?*' The
 " soil is celebrated for its beauty and fruitfulness,
 " and the air is so very temperate and serene,
 " that people live there to a great age,
 " and are seldom troubled with sickness. But
 " then, on the other hand, these islands are so
 " surrounded with rocks on all sides, that with-

"out a perfect knowledge of the passage a small vessel cannot be brought to haven. Again, we are told, that they are subject to violent storms; sometimes with terrible clattering of thunder, and dismal flashing of lightning.—And besides, **SIR GEORGE SUMMERS, WHEN HE MADE THE DISCOVERY,** was actually **SHIPWRECKED** on the coast. This, I take it, might be a sufficient foundation for our author's using the epithet ***still-vex'd.***

Here we see, that Mr. Theobald knew, as well as Mr. Capell, of the shipwreck of Somers, if that be any thing to the purpose. It is now above seventy years since this remark was made; and I ask, whether in that period any man, any woman, or any child, ever supposed that Theobald was acquainted with the origin of **THE TEMPEST;** or thought that the import of the foregoing passage was, that this comedy immediately took its rise from the shipwreck of Somers at Bermuda? And I say further, that he who should maintain that Theobald was acquainted with the peculiar circumstances which produced this play, might do so with much more probability than he who should ascribe that knowledge to Mr. Capell; for though Theobald knew nothing of the matter, he has here said nothing by which his ignorance of its true origin can be decisively proved; while, on the other hand, Capell was so little aware of any immediate connection or relation between the storm that shipwrecked

Somers and the play, and so far was he from supposing that this circumstance was its immediate origin, that he has almost expressly declared his ignorance on the subject; carefully separating the drama from the event that gave birth to it, and assuming that **SOME YEARS** must have elapsed between that event and the construction of the play; during which time, according to his theory, the notions concerning the enchantment ascribed to these islands became well known, and *at last* in the year 1612 or 1613 reached the ear of Shakspeare.

If, however, it should be objected that Mr. Theobald has no pretensions to this discovery, because it does not appear from his note that he had any knowledge of the magical character of the Bermudas; then I say, that Dr. Farmer, Mr. Steevens, and Bishop Percy, who had Theobald's note before them, and who knew from thence (if from no other quarter) of the shipwreck of Somers, and whose own notes shew that they were perfectly apprized of the magical character of the Bermudas, have as good a title to this discovery as Mr. Capell: yet I am confident, if one thousand competent judges were asked, whether they believed that the three gentlemen above-named had the slightest knowledge, or even suspicion, of the true and immediate origin of this play, as stated in the preceding tract, that, without one dissentient voice, they would instantly answer in the negative.

Though Mr. Capell's words decisively shew the futility of the conclusion founded upon them, some other circumstances ought not to be omitted, in the consideration of this question, if indeed it can be made a question for a moment. It should therefore be remembered, that Mr. Capell wrote and published an express account of what he conceived to be the origin of all Shakspeare's plays; and that in that account, in speaking of *THE TEMPEST*, he has not introduced the slightest notice of the storm which dispersed Sir George Somers's fleet, or of his shipwreck;—that if he had known any of the incidents attending that dispersion and wreck, which are alluded to in this comedy, he would unquestionably have stated them, and the respective passages with which they correspond;—that not having done so, it is clear, he knew nothing of them; and therefore never could have thought or supposed that the misadventure of Somers and his companions was the immediate origin of this beautiful comedy.

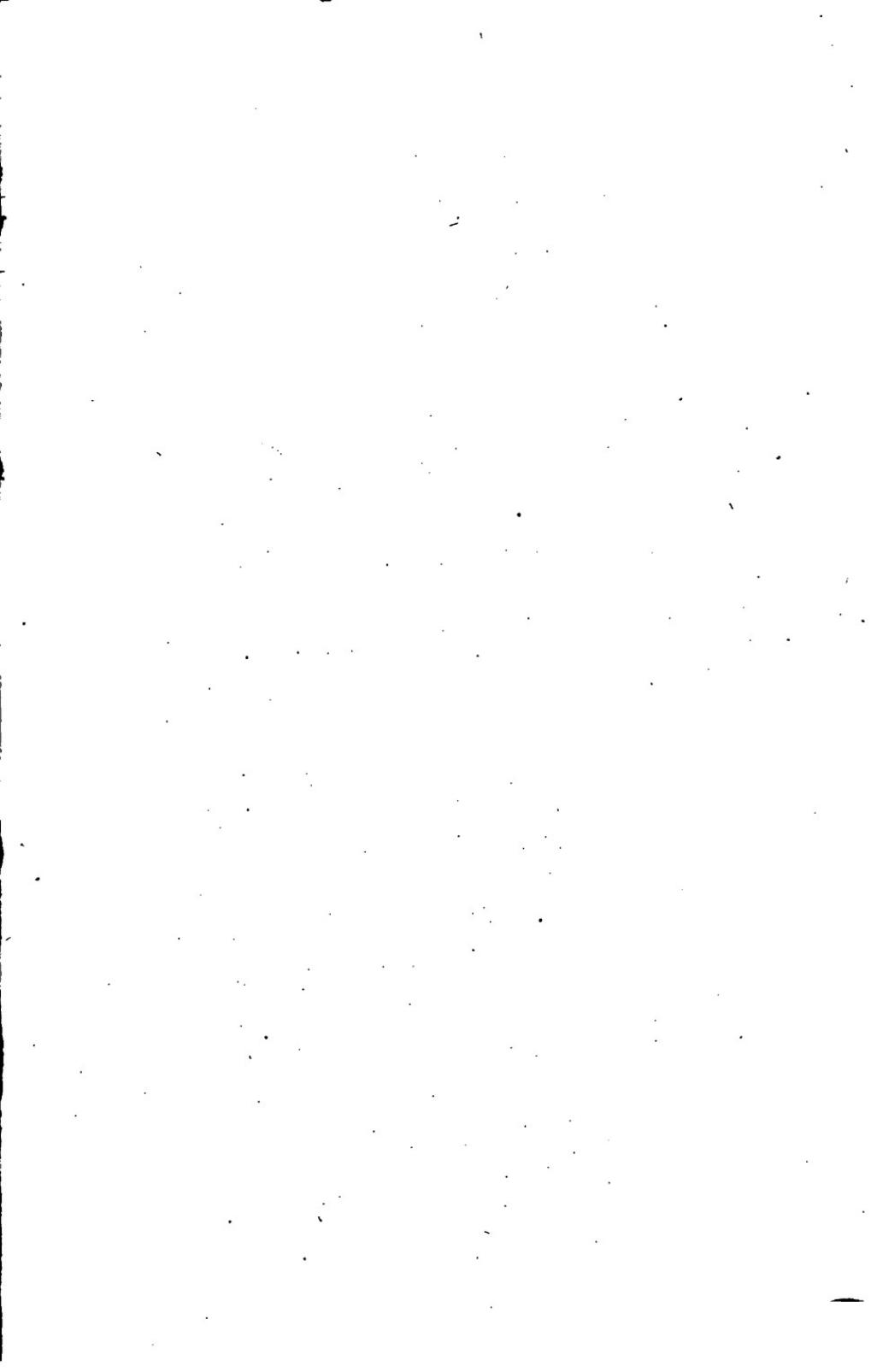
That Mr. Steevens and the other gentlemen whom I have mentioned, were acquainted with the disaster of Somers, cannot be doubted; because they all had occasion, from what is said in this comedy concerning the Bermudas, to consider when and by whom those islands were discovered, and what opinions were entertained respecting them. But it is manifest, that neither they nor Mr. Capell had the slightest suspicion that the storm which

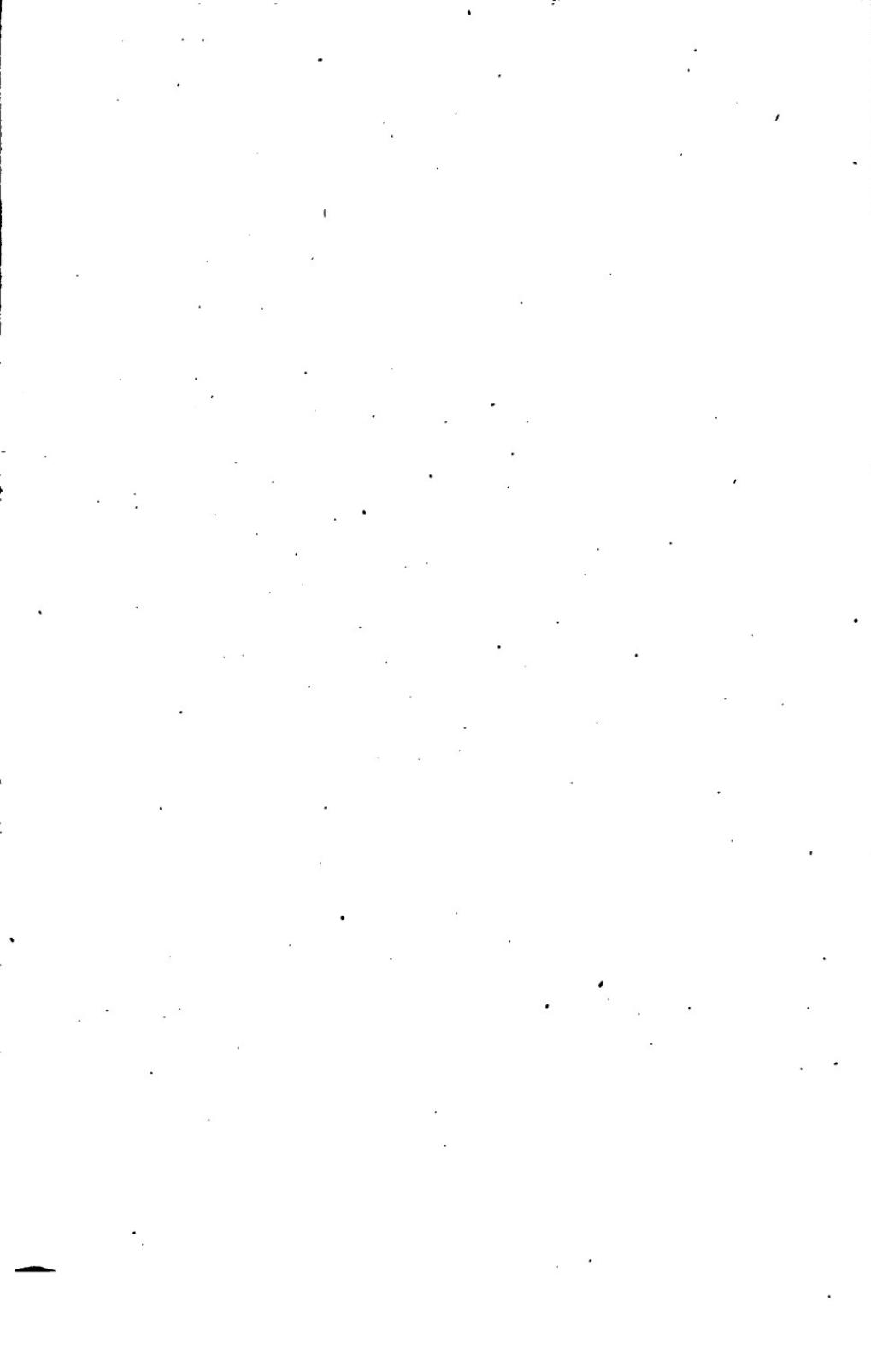
dispersed Somers's fleet, and wrecked his vessel on these islands, gave rise to the play; nor did any one of them know when the accounts of that disaster first arrived in England, or at what precise period the history of these events became generally known, by means of the various pamphlets published concerning them. I have a right to assume that they were ignorant of these circumstances, because, if they had been apprized of them, unquestionably they would not have concealed their knowledge.—With respect to myself, I certainly had no notion of the true origin of this comedy, till in the year 1800 or 1801 I read Jourdan's narrative of the disaster that befel his Admiral: when, the passage in **THE TEMPEST**, in which an account is given of the dispersion of Alonso's fleet, and that the king's ship was, by those who escaped the peril of the storm, supposed to be lost, as well as the peculiar manner in which that ship is said to have been preserved, struck me so forcibly, that I thought Shakspeare must have had the incidents attending Somers's voyage, immediately in view, when he wrote his comedy. Our poet himself, as I have already observed, drew us all away from the true scent, by placing the scene of his play at a distance from the island where the ship of Somers was wrecked; and no printed account of his disaster, or concerning the Bermudas, having been met with, prior to the year 1612, an opinion generally prevailed, that the play.

was produced at a later period. This circumstance was still in contemplation, and drew away every investigator of the subject from its real and immediate source; nor could its origin and true date have been easily discovered and ascertained, without the aid of those pamphlets, and other papers, of which I have availed myself on this occasion, particularly the two tracts published in the latter end of the year 1610. With what difficulty and trouble the various pieces perused and compared for this purpose, were procured, their respective dates precisely ascertained by the aid of the entries in the Stationers' Registers, and the correspondence established between the extraordinary circumstances of Sir George Somers's disaster and the various passages of this comedy in which they are covertly alluded to, will not readily be conceived by those who have not been engaged in similar researches. They who have had occasion to trace and to collect all the minute particulars of an event that happened two centuries ago, well know the tedious difficulties and frequent disappointments attending on such dark and remote inquiries.

E. M.

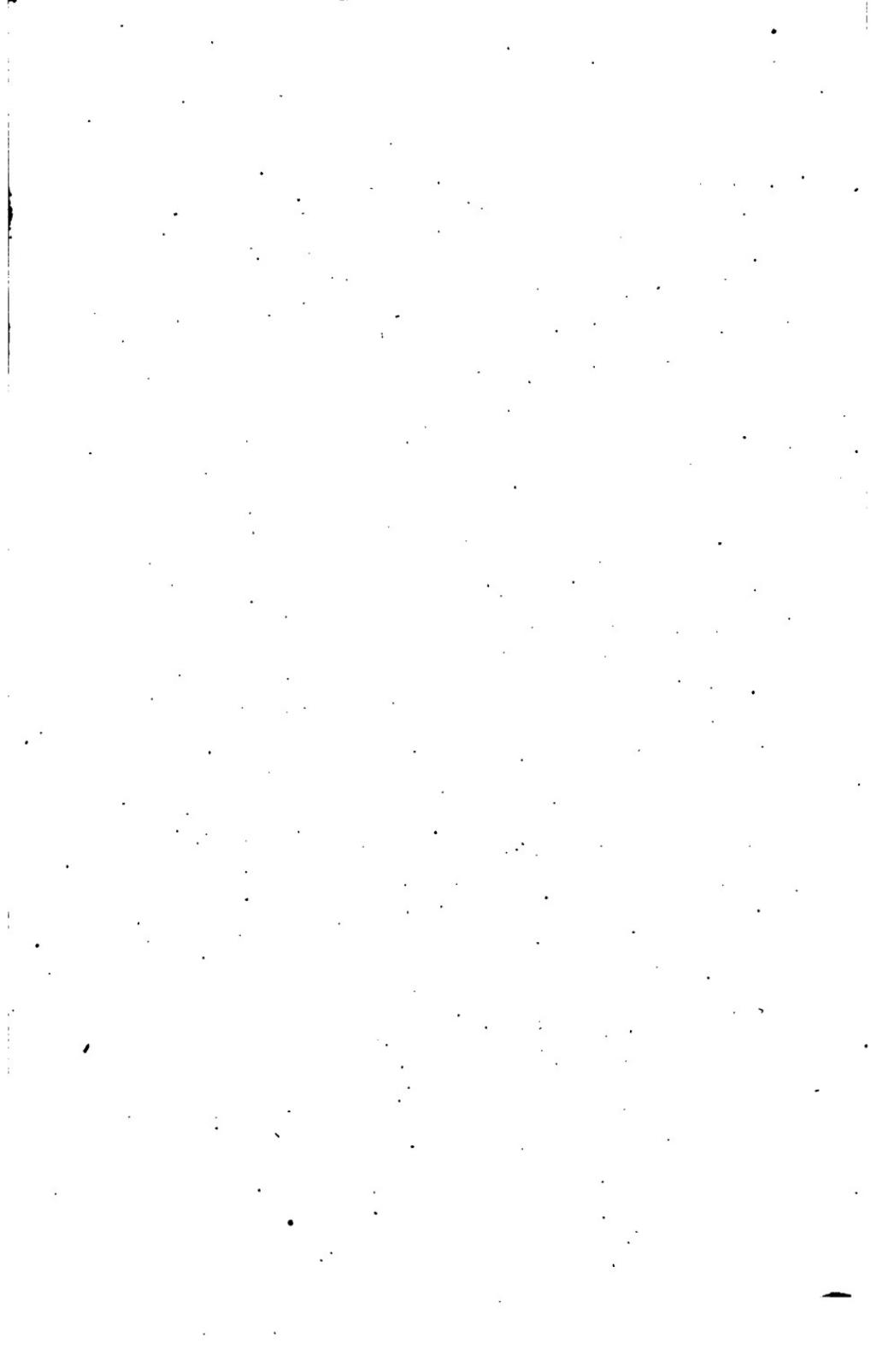
FOLEY-PLACE, January 21, 1809.



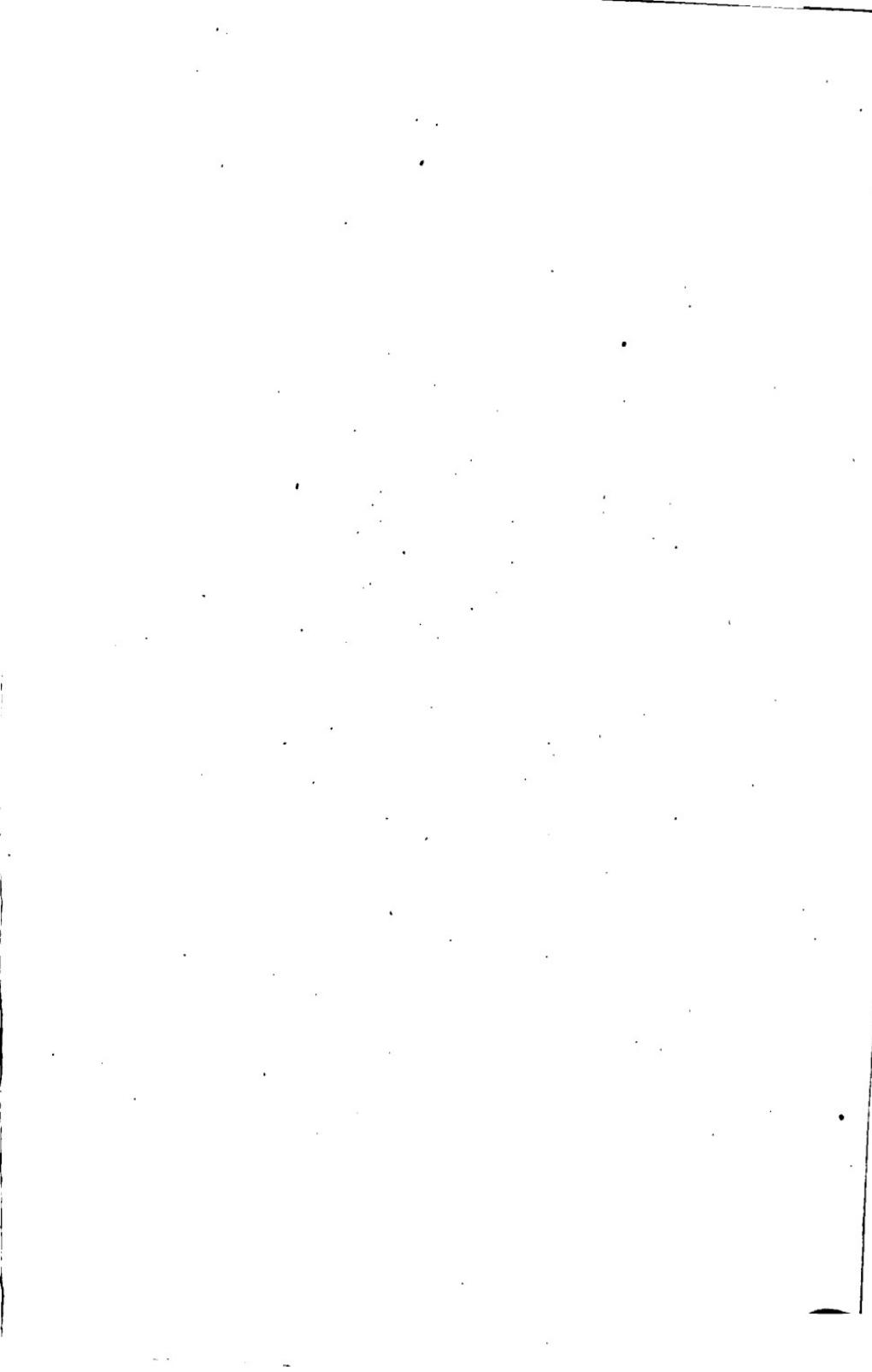


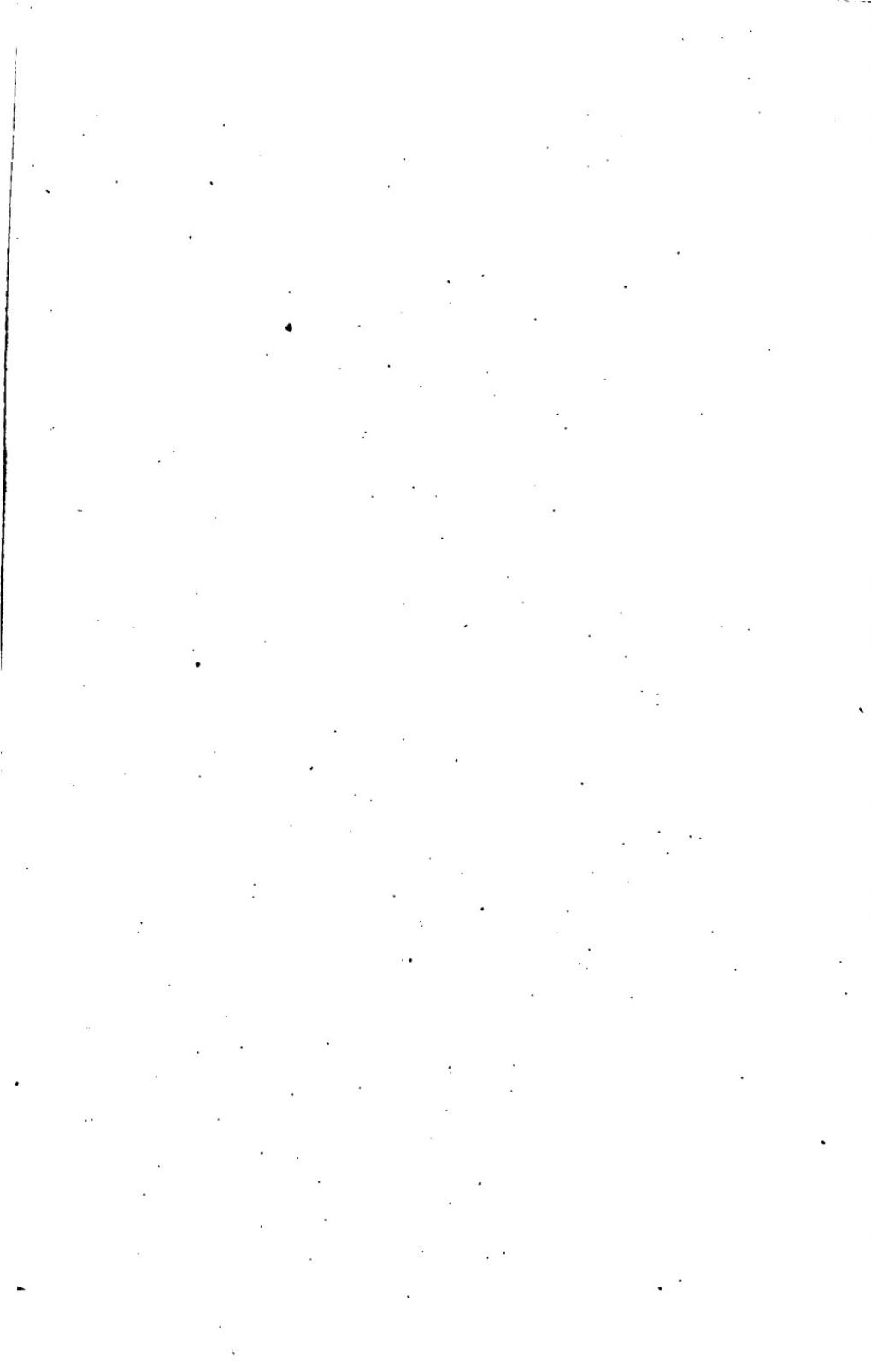




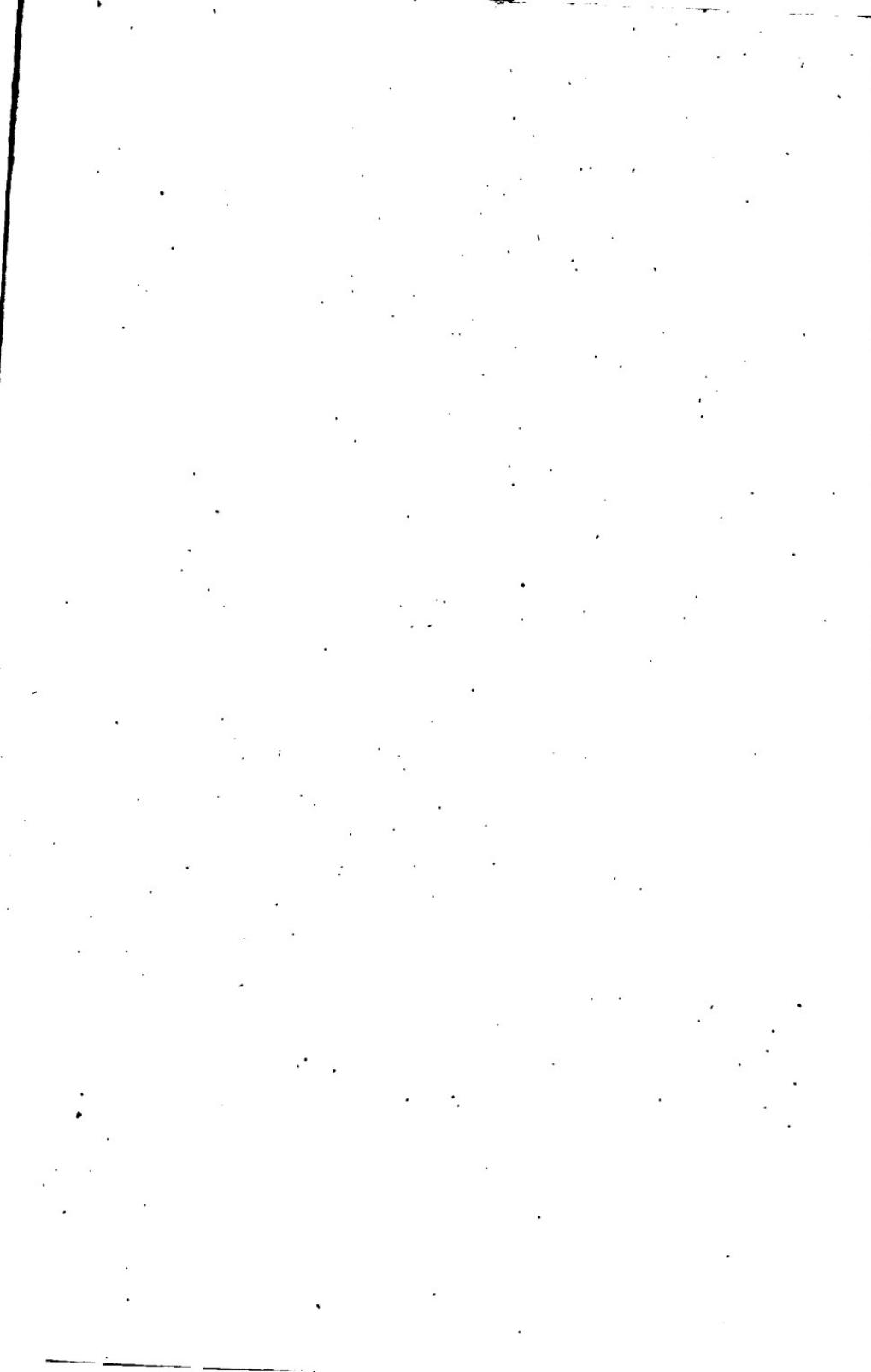
































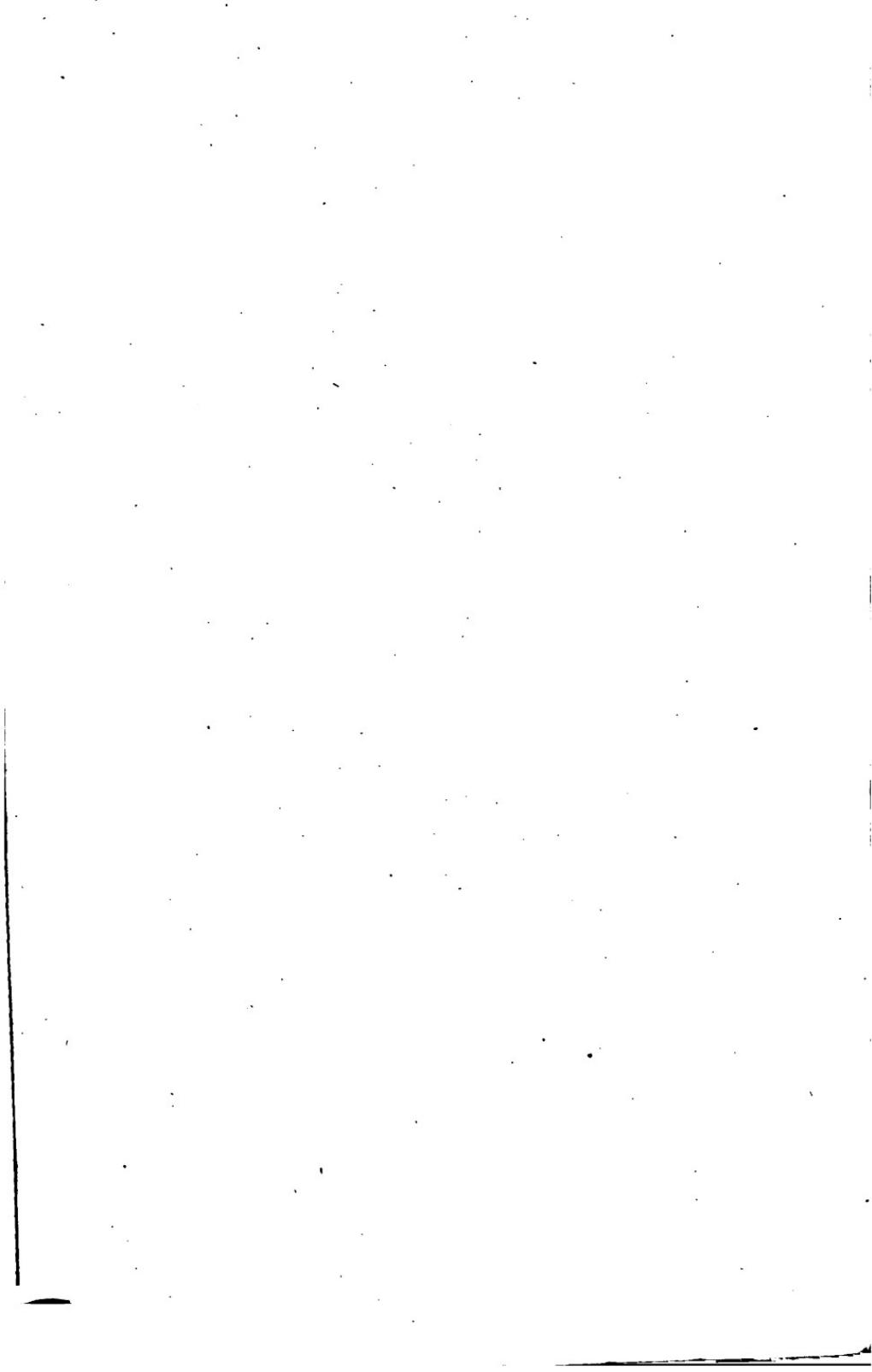


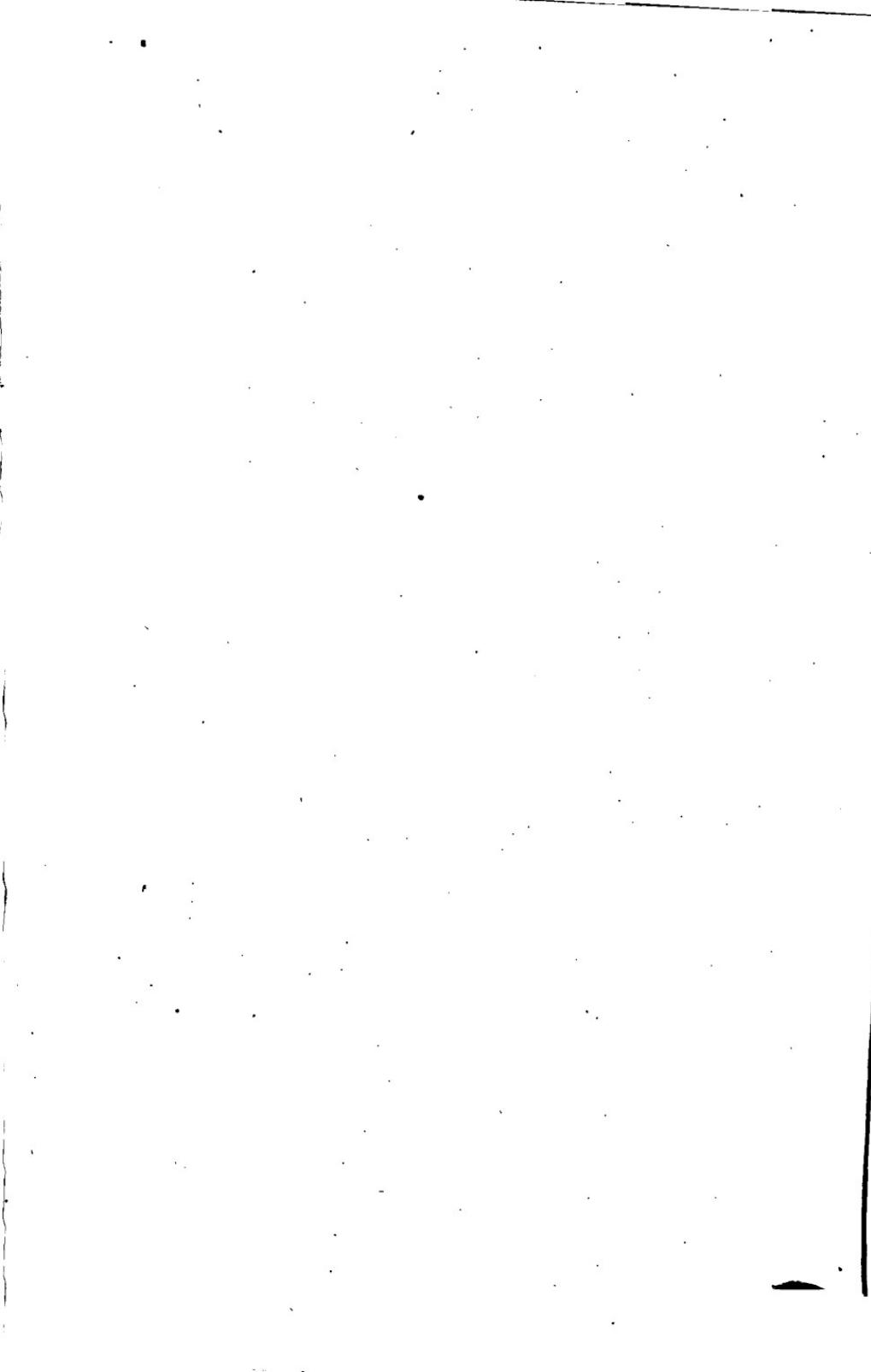






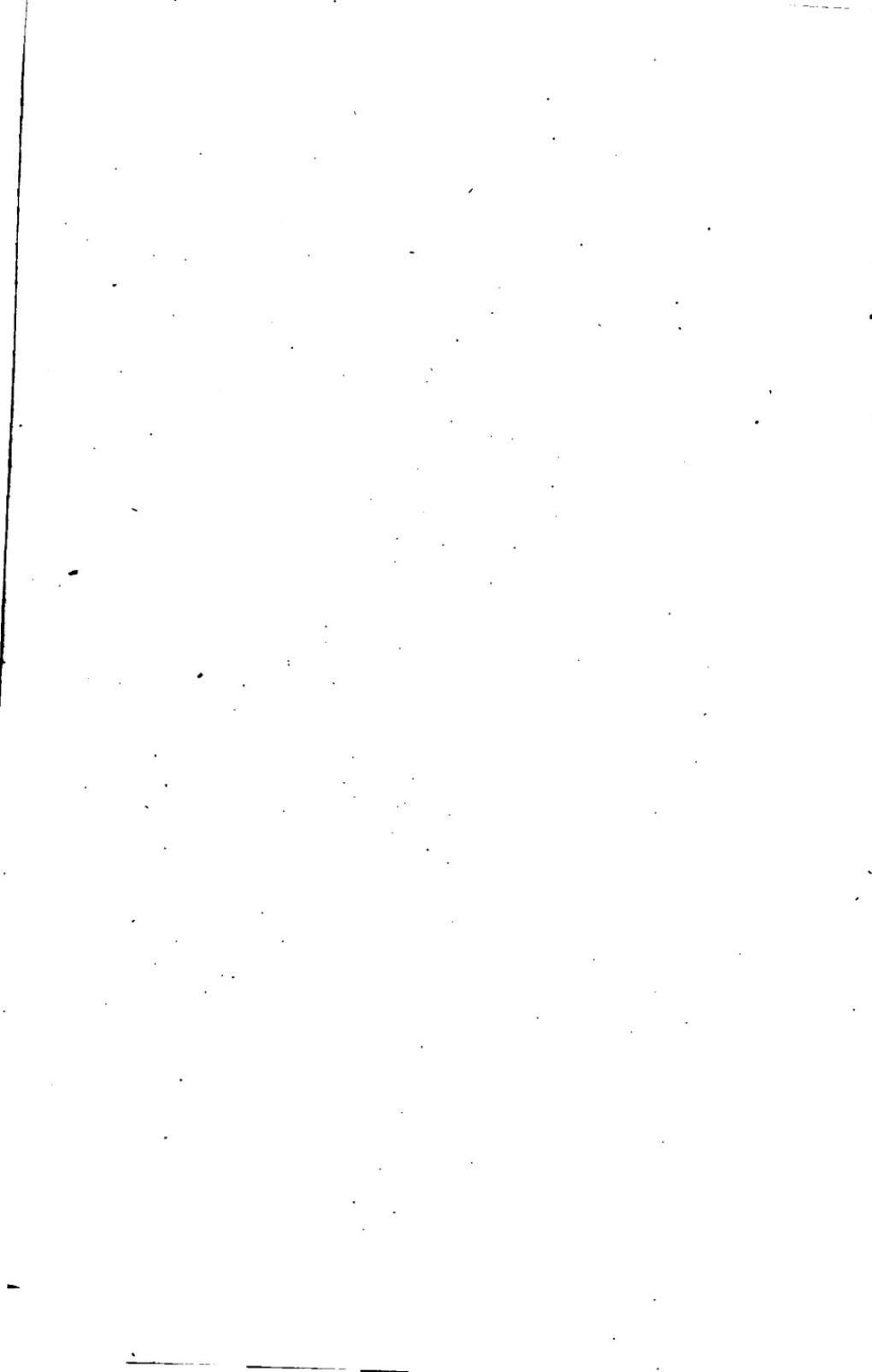


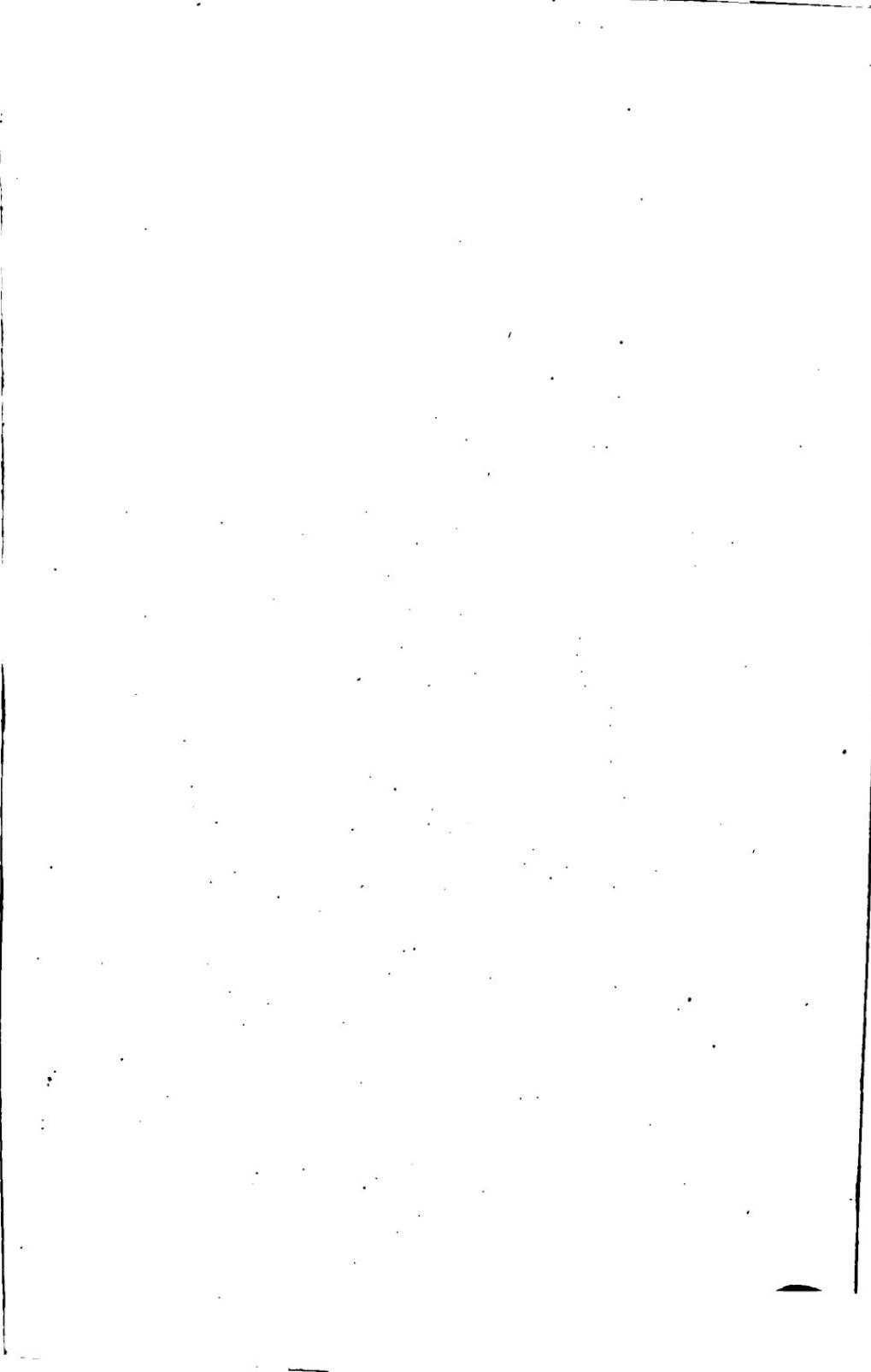




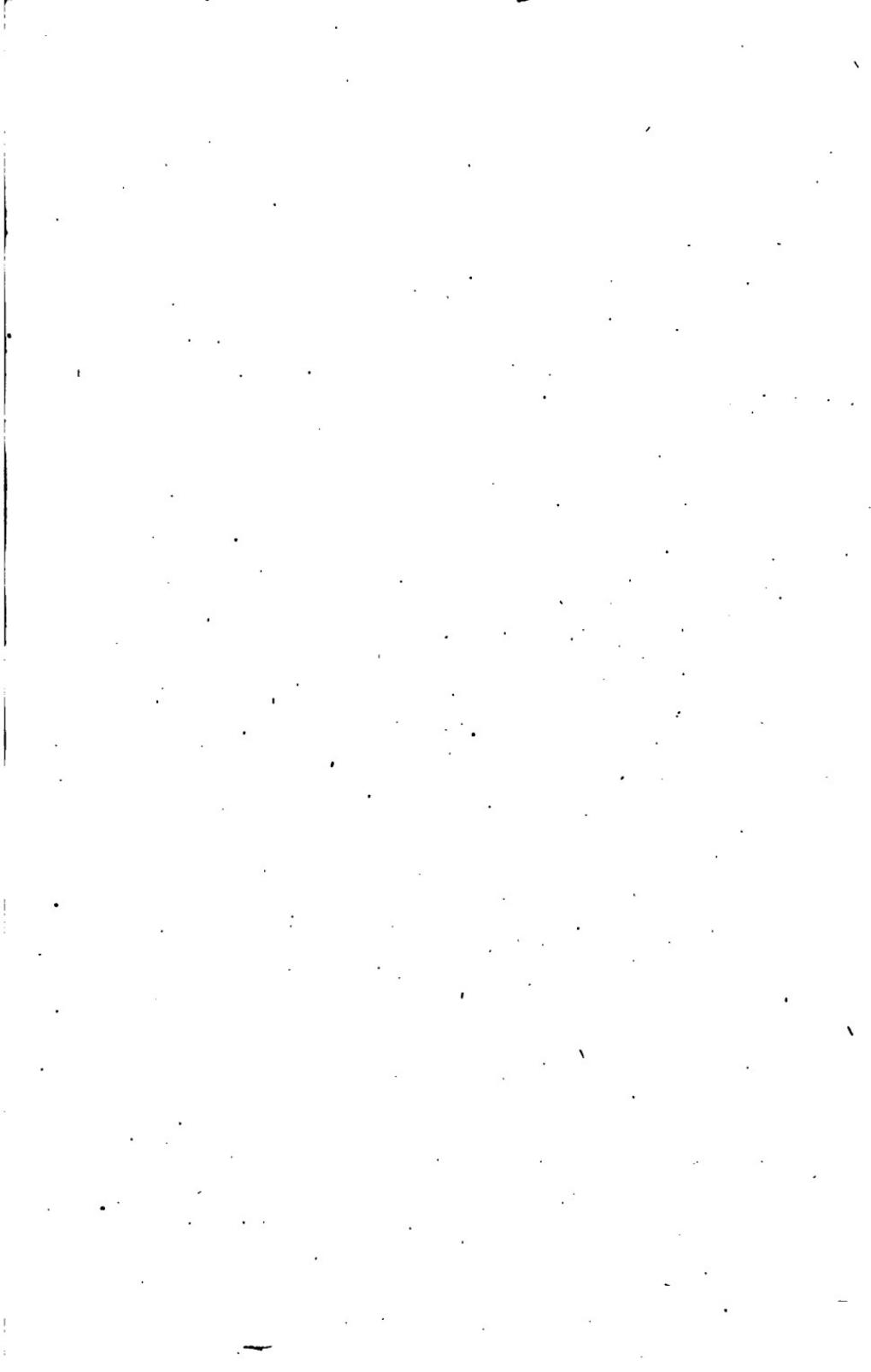


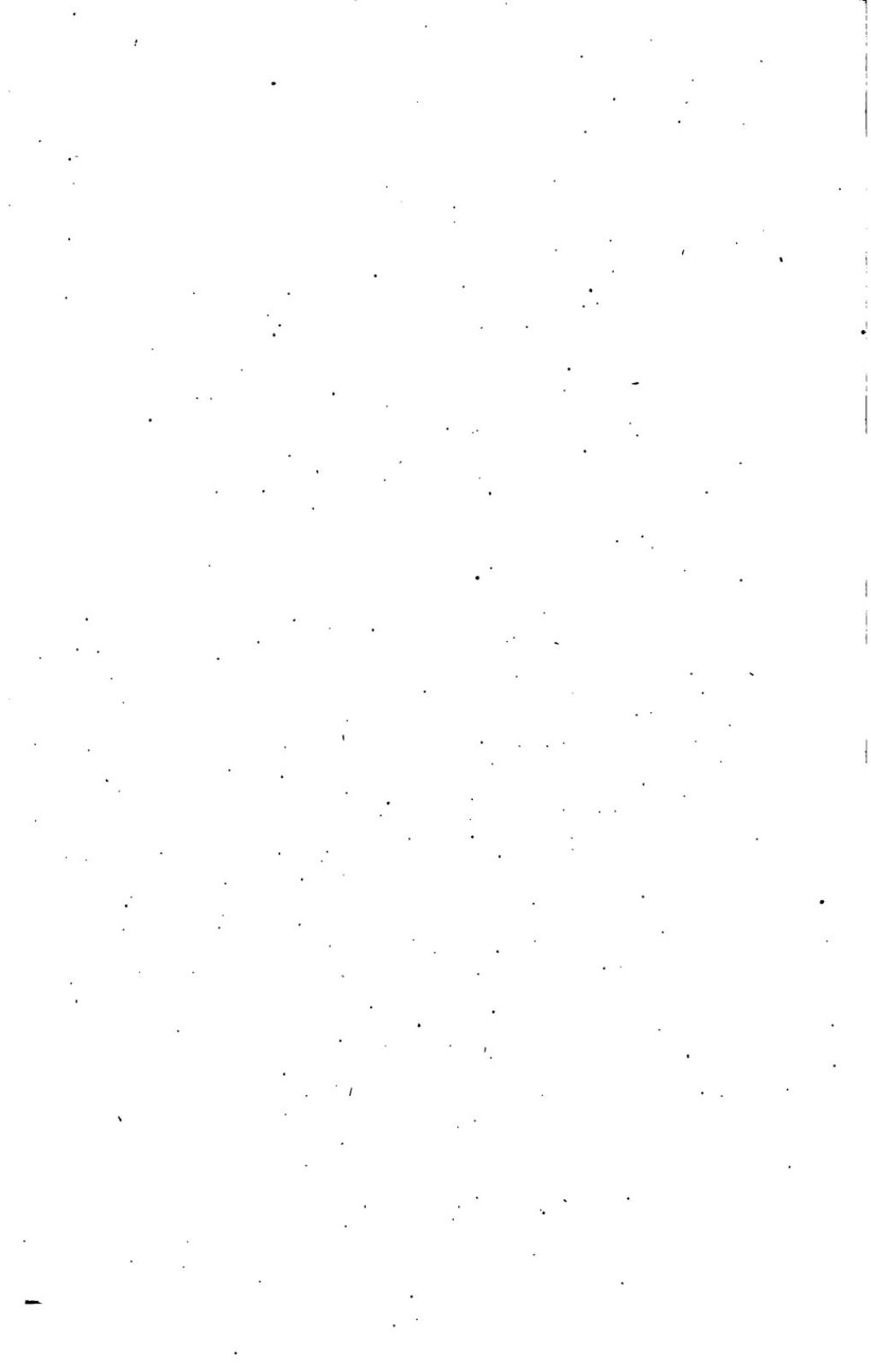


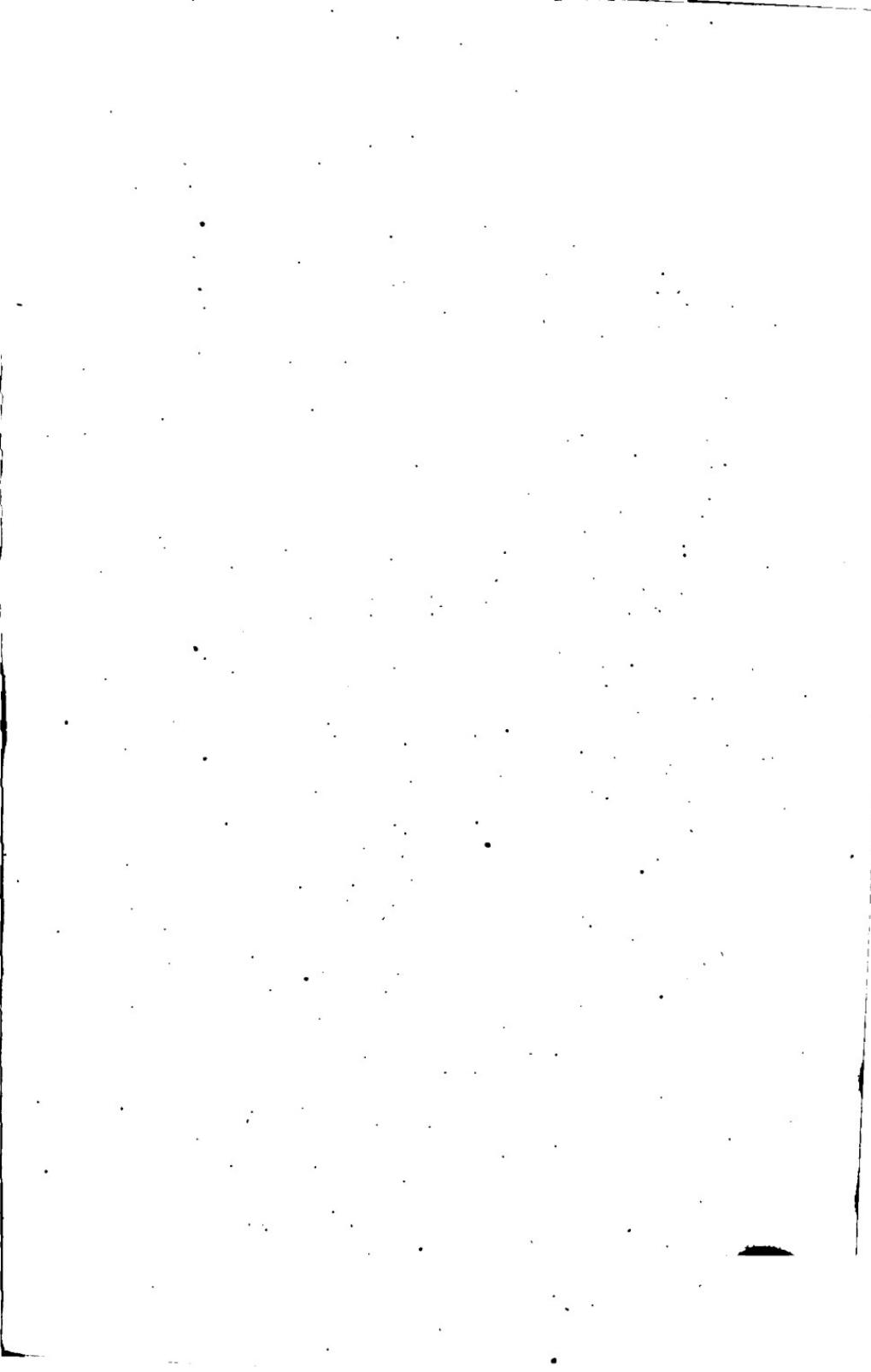




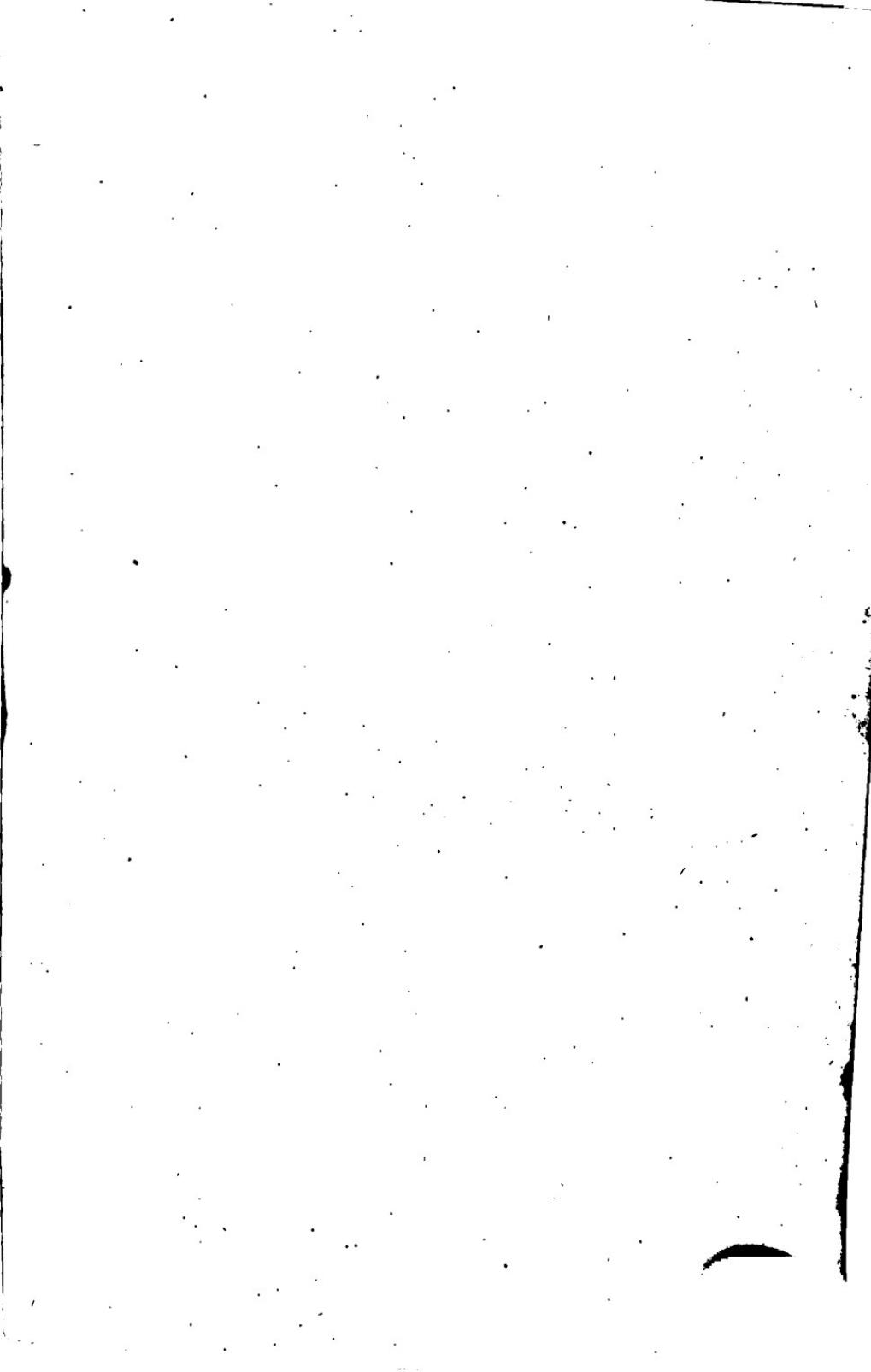


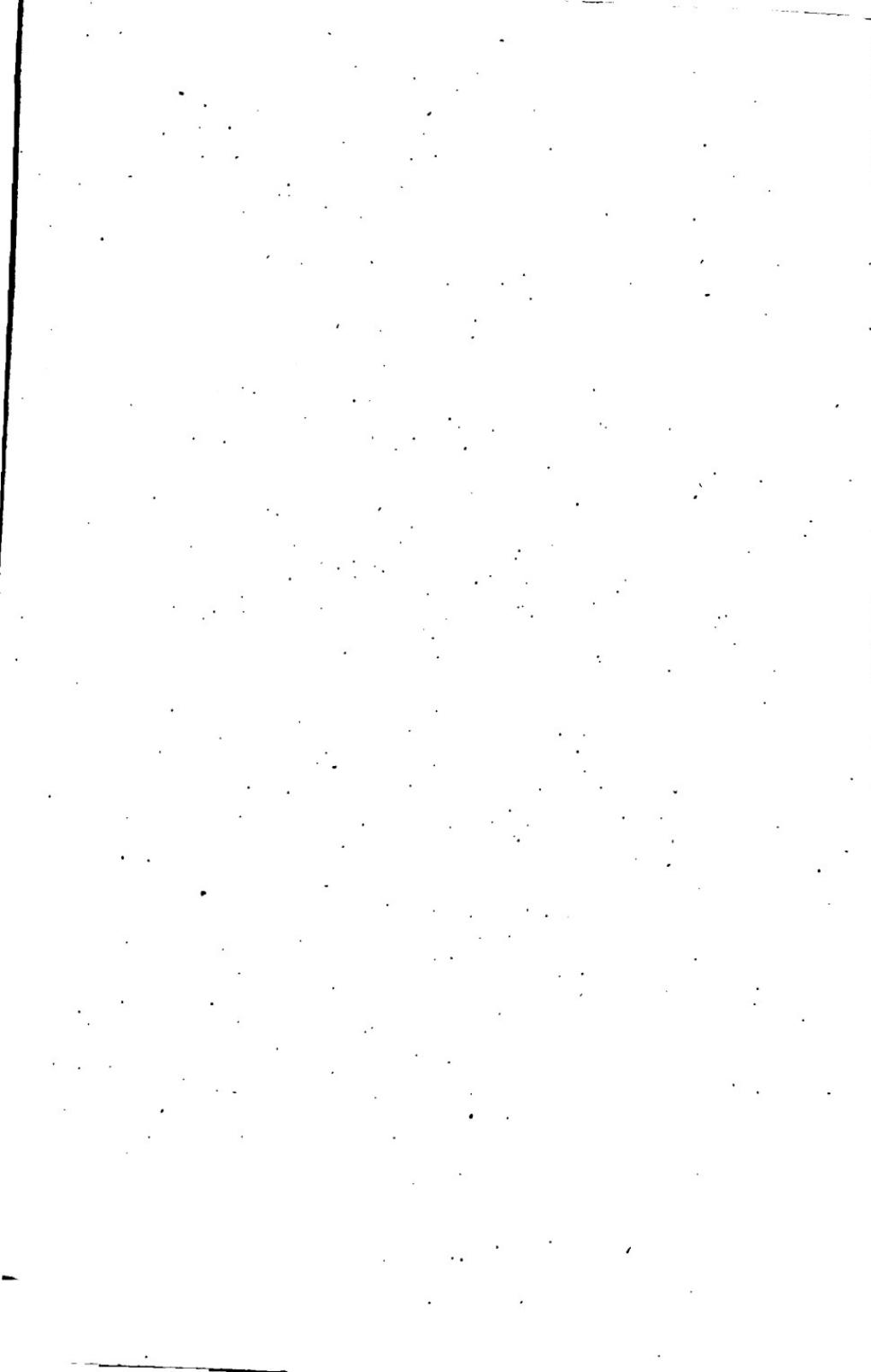


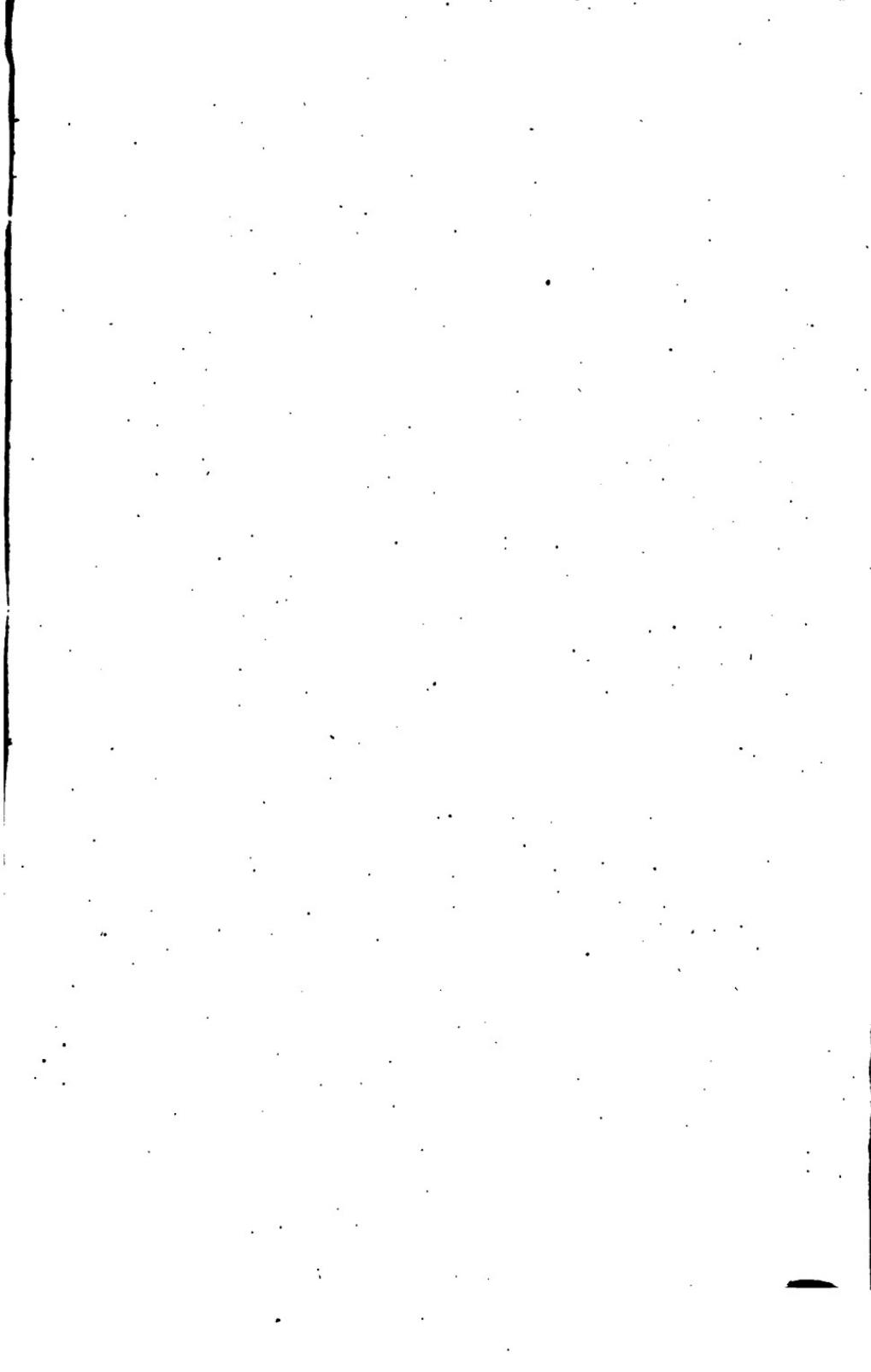




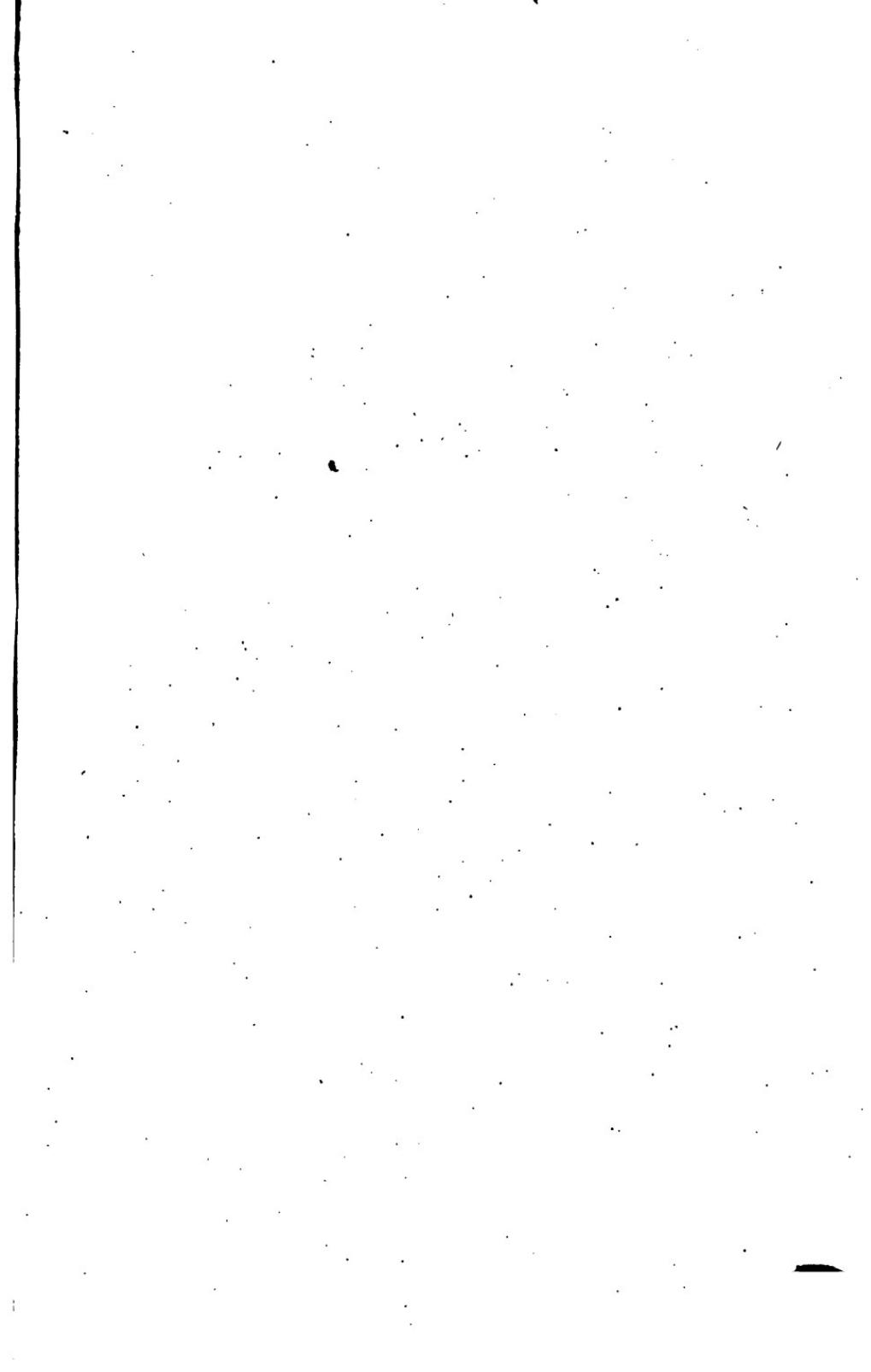




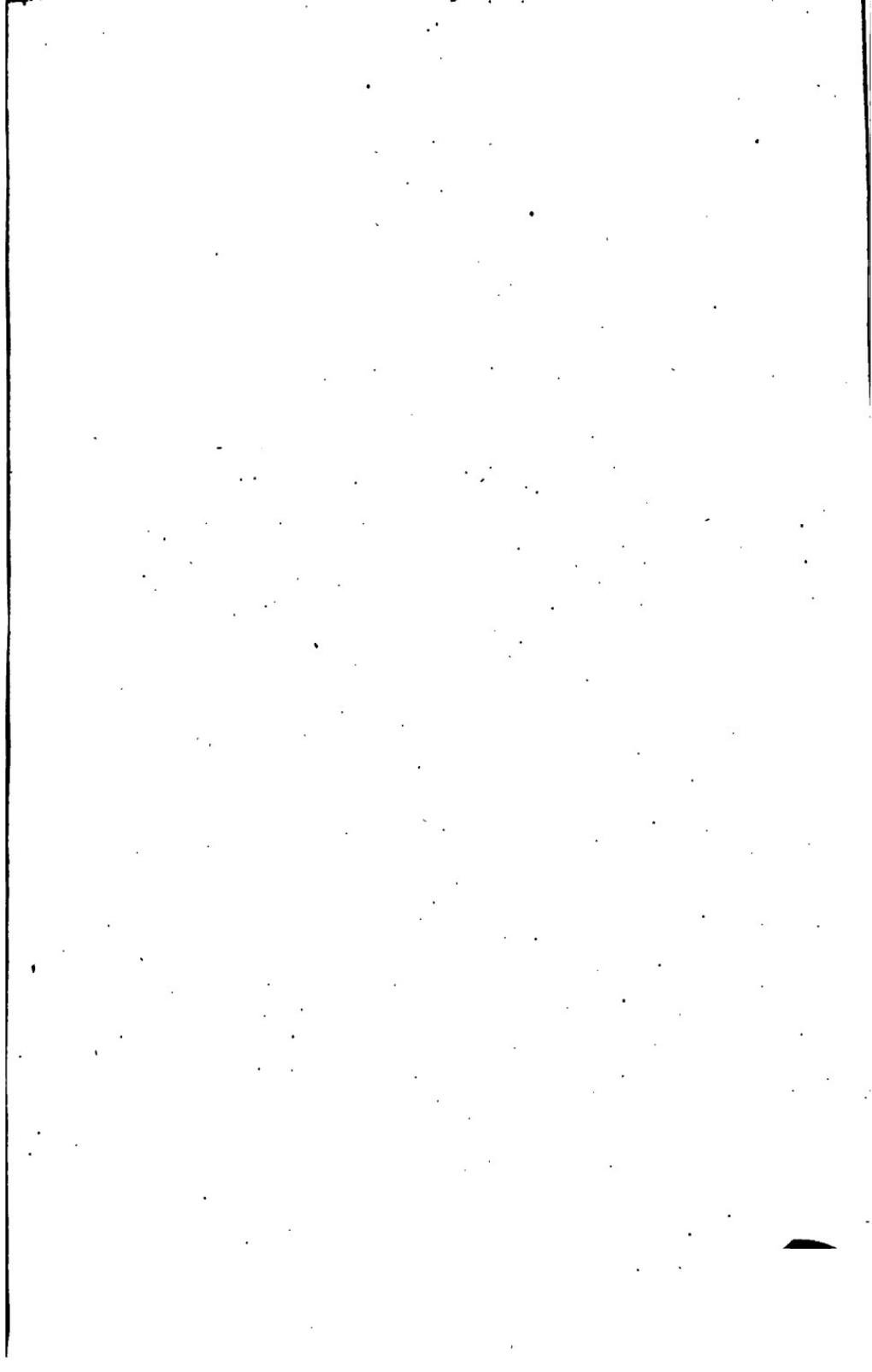




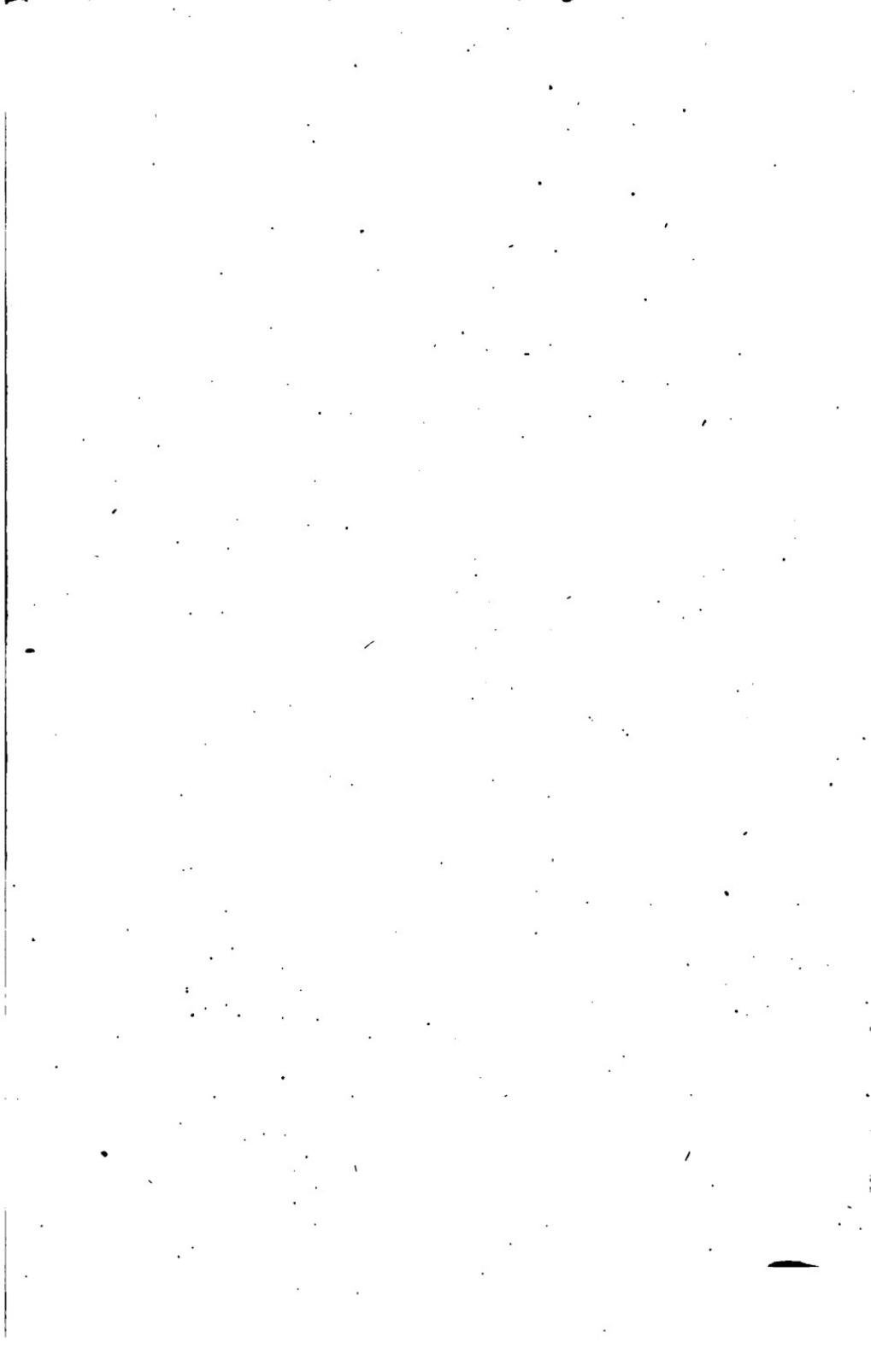




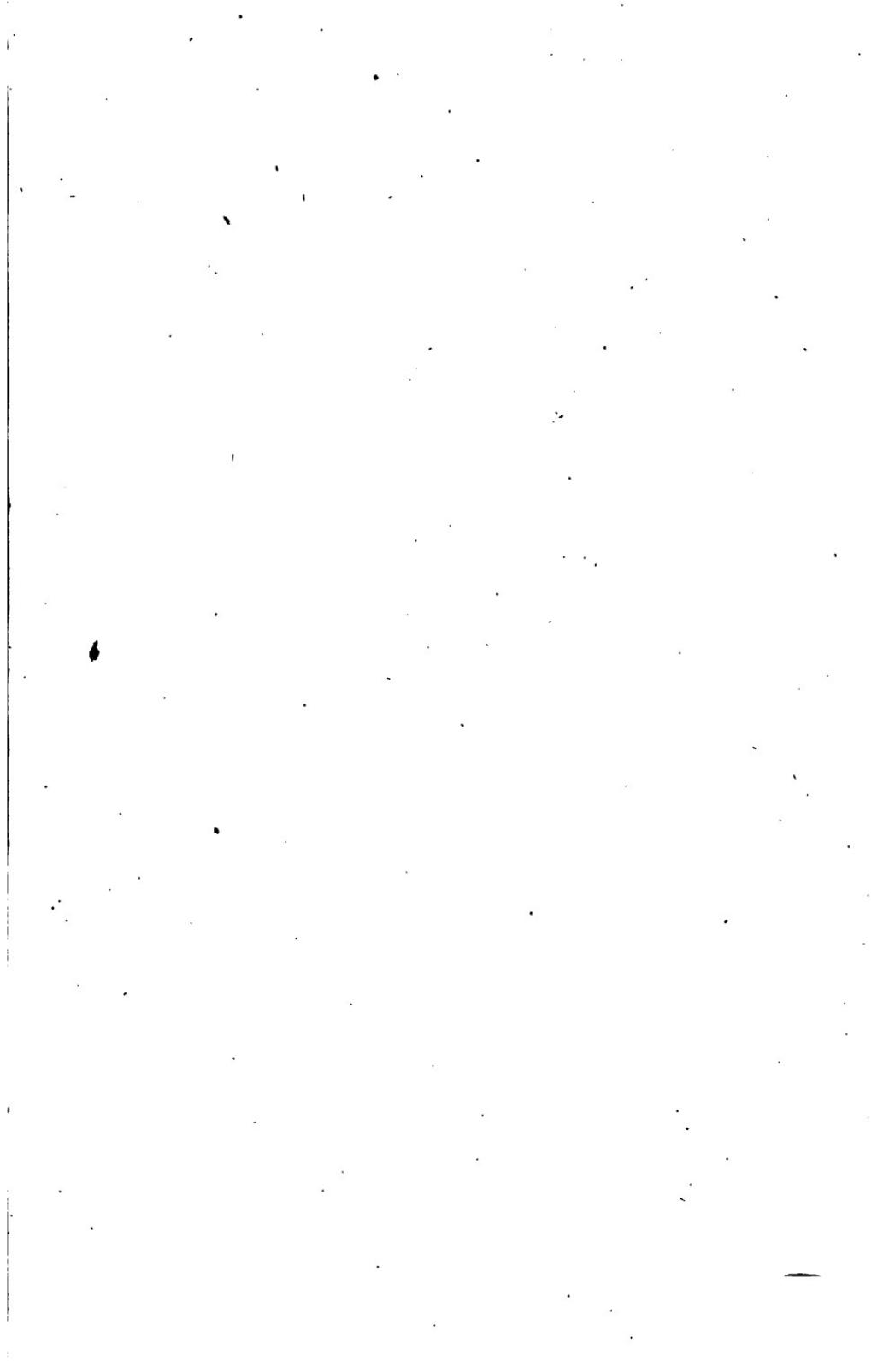






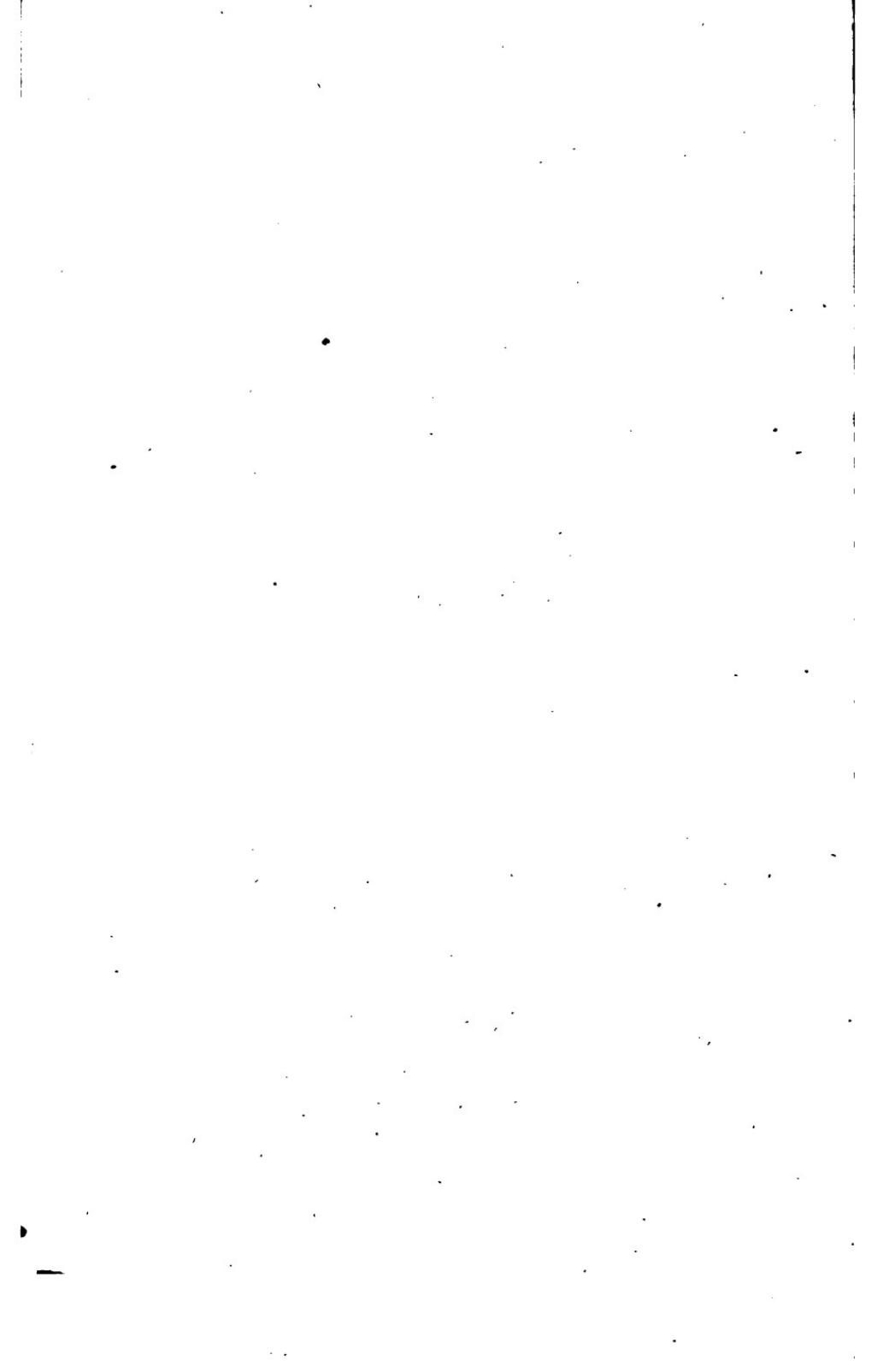








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